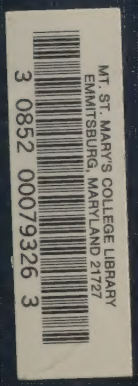
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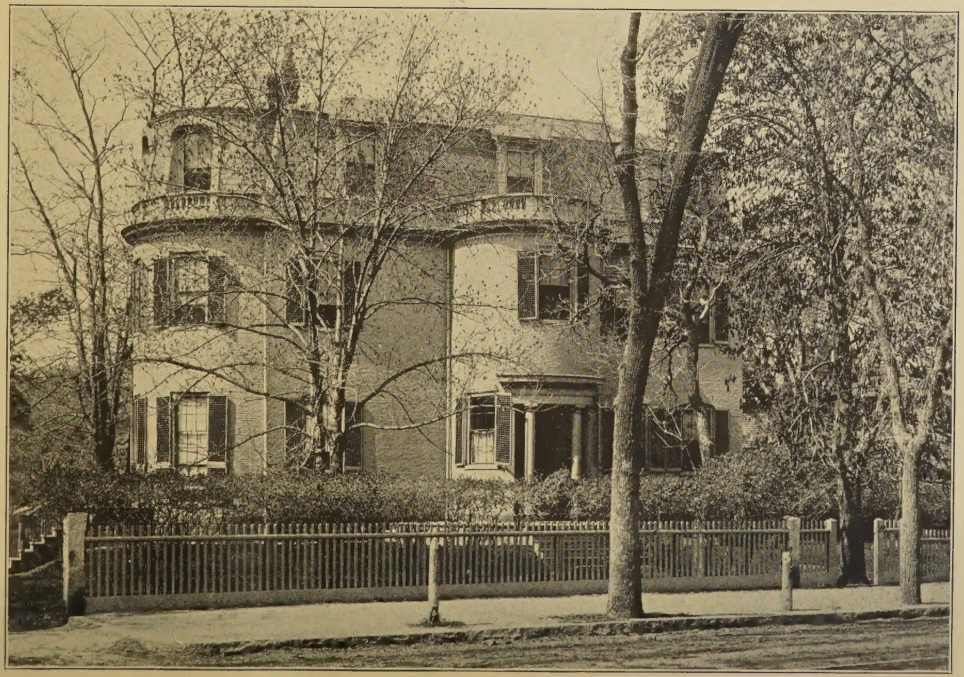

THE FAY HOMESTEAD

1885

THE STORY OF FAY HOUSE

BY

CHRISTINA HOPKINSON BAKER

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PREFACE

IN THIS May of 1929, Radcliffe College celebrates its fiftieth anniversary. While in numbers, both of courses and of students, the vigorous college has exceeded the dream of its founders, yet their purpose has remained unchanged — the repetition of Harvard instruction to qualified women, with identical examinations and standards. Corresponding to this essential permanence at the heart of Radcliffe's growth is the permanence of Fay House, once the only shelter of the experiment, now the centre of a college for over a thousand students. So interwoven is this tangible, visible Radcliffe with the spiritual *alma mater* of those who have studied there that the story of the life of the house has seemed to the College authorities a fitting part of the anniversary celebration.

The range of my acknowledgments will give a hint of the corresponding range of occupations and interests of those who lived during 133 years in Fay House, and upon the land for 295 years. The new associations which have gathered about this historical spot since it became Radcliffe College are scarcely touched upon here. They are alive in the affectionate memories of Radcliffe women. In these pages is the record

of the past, necessarily incomplete as is all history, picturing a society gone by, but showing as well those human interests and passions that do not change — a past toward which the college may look with a surprised realization of continuity. Old New England is between these covers, for the amused and understanding consideration of New Englanders. Here, I hope, her far-scattered children may feel at home, and those to whom New England traits are strange may find enlightenment.

With the invaluable aid of Miss Rose Sherman, former librarian of Radcliffe College, who has gathered material with the persistence of a sleuth and the accuracy of a scholar, I have tried to reproduce this fragment of the past. It has seemed wise to quote liberally from authorities in order to give to the detail its contemporary flavor. Much of this quoted material is by permission of and special arrangement with Houghton Mifflin Company, the authorized publishers of the biographies thus drawn upon. I am also gratefully indebted to G. P. Putnam's Sons and to Harper & Brothers; to the editors of the *Harvard Graduates' Magazine*, the *Atlantic Monthly*, *Science*, and the *Nation;* to the officers of the Porcellian Club and to the Cambridge Historical Society, the Colonial Society of Massachusetts, the American Chemical Society, and the American Philosophical Society. I

am indebted to the Massachusetts Historical Society for permission to reproduce the portrait of Edward Everett. I am especially grateful to members and friends of the Fay, McKean, and Dana families for their coöperation and to the Harvard College Library for permission to print hitherto unpublished material from its archives and for interested aid.

CHRISTINA HOPKINSON BAKER

May, 1929

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THE STORY OF FAY HOUSE

I

Farm and "Pallysadoe"

(1634–1806)

IN CAMBRIDGE, Massachusetts, halfway between Longfellow House and Harvard College, an oval-bayed, red-brick house looks out over the Common at the corner where the Washington Elm once stood. It is Fay House, the administration building of Radcliffe College, where over a thousand young women undertake a Harvard education. New facts and new theories, new efficiency, and new standards — here, if anywhere, is the present day. But this very house that seems an epitome of youth itself was a homestead for three quarters of a century, and this land over which youth saunters or hastens was home land for two hundred and fifty years. Pioneer and farmer, artisan and teacher, scholar and judge, have lived here. And now the circle has closed. Again the pioneer is here. An experiment in education flourishes where, on the wilderness way, Guy Bambrige cleared his land in 1634.

Bambrige belonged to that little town the site of which was chosen by Governor Winthrop and Deputy

Governor Dudley, wishing to find for settlement a place safe from attack by ships. Up the river from Boston, or down through the forest from Watertown, they came on December 28, 1630, after meetings for discussion, and chose that river bank where now the narrow streets of old Cambridge, Holyoke, Dunster, and Winthrop overlie the original Crooked Street, Water Street, and Long Lane of Newtowne. River lay before it. Forest backed it and enclosed it. But through the forest behind the town passed the ancient path from Charlestown to Watertown, where now Kirkland, Mason, and Brattle Streets roughly follow its windings. A "pallysadoe" was built around the town; a thousand acres were impaled by trees felled and set in the ground. The old town was divided into "the Towne," "Cowyard Rowe," "Westend," and "By the ffresh Pond." It was ruled that "all the houses [within the bounds of the town] shall be covered [with] slate or board and not with thatch. . . . All [the houses shall] range even and stand just six [feet on each man's] own ground from the street." [1] This orderliness was a feature of the little town set down in the wilderness, and must have helped much to give a feeling of permanence and security to the residents. But there are always those who reach out from security, and it would seem that Guy Bambrige

1. *Records of the Town of Cambridge.* Cambridge, 1901.

was one of these; for on the 5th of January, 1634, he was allotted "4 ackrs" behind the "Pyne Swamp" and on the 4th of August, 1634, that "i ackr" in West End which passes on through three centuries to the possession of Radcliffe College. The "Pyne Swamp" touched the outer boundary of the town; the "i ackr" in West End was near a town gate and faced on the "ancient path." A palisade protected him from Indians and wild beasts — no small peril these. William Wood, in his *New England's Prospect*, published in 1634, wrote that people who had lost their way in the woods in the neighborhood of Boston often heard "such terrible roarings as have made them much aghast; which must be either Devils or Lyons, there being no other Creatures which use to roare saving Beares, which have not such a terrible kind of roaring." Wolves were much in evidence and were described in the records of the General Court as "ravenous cruel creatures; and daily vexations to all ye inhabitants of ye colony." In spite of catamounts and wolves, here Guy Bambrige built; but when he died, in 1645, his widow promptly returned to near neighbors in the town proper, exchanging houses with William Towne, on Water Street. From him Henry Prentice, called "the Planter," bought the house and land, moved from Sudbury, lived here, and died here in 1654. In Prentice hands the property remained for

over one hundred and fifty years. The house may have looked like that which Henry's son Solomon built later, near by, in the present Garden Street, near Waterhouse Street, which was standing in 1883 — end on to the street, two-storied, with outhouses and sheds, three windows above and one each side of the front door. The inventory of his possessions is in the town records, itemizing bed, table and "chayre," sheets, napkins, bed-bolster and blankets, iron pot, kettle, wedges and handsaw, one pewter dish, and porringer. These were farming folk, simple in way of life, by the second generation indifferent to education, at grips with hunger and cold and mere living.

Down through the family the property passed until Henry Prentice, "the Cooper," sold it to his son John in 1784, for £120. In John must have flared up the old energy that sent Henry the Planter across seas to a new country. He passed through Harvard College, his mother helping by sweeping the college buildings, read law and practised it in Londonderry, New Hampshire, and led a distinguished public life in New Hampshire as attorney-general, representative, and speaker of the House. He was a subscriber to the declaration made at Londonderry, 1776, to oppose Great Britain *vi et armis*. This must have cleared his conscience of his signature to the complimentary address to the Royal Governor, Thomas Hutchinson, in

May, 1774, which he repudiated five months later thus vigorously: "Whereas I the Subscriber signed an Address to the late Governor Hutchinson . . . I wish the Devil had had such Address before I had seen it. John Prentice." He let his brother William live in the Cambridge house. But William was of a different stuff. Though he had prepared for Harvard College, he did not enter. He taught pupils at home but some inner flaw of character, or over-indulgence in liquor as the family biographer suggests, sapped his energy, even to the extent of his continuing to live in the house when the fallen roof made the cellar his home. This is the lowest point in the fortune of the "ackr."

The town had changed but little in the hundred and sixty years. Until the Great Bridge connected it with Boston, it remained isolated and small. In 1750, there were but about fifteen hundred residents. Manufactures were unknown. But what events took place in the little town the Prentice house was exactly placed to see, on the ancient highway and the Common Lands. This great tract, the Common Lands, originally stretched a half mile from Harvard Square to the present Linnaean Street. It was primarily a cow pasture, indeed was called the "Cow Common." Not until 1724 was the part north of the present Waterhouse Street apportioned into lots. It remained in the hands of the "Proprietors of the Common

Lands" until 1769, when it was granted to the town of Cambridge "to be used as a training field, to lie undivided, and to remain for that use forever." Not until 1830 were paths laid out and fences raised, largely at the expense of a man whom we shall meet again at Fay House.

The windows of the Prentice house looked out upon land thus barren, but many passions and enthusiasms swept over the open space. Directly across the Common stood a great oak, near which the men of the town, as their forefathers in England, gathered for town meeting. Here in 1637 was staged the election conflict between ex-Governor Winthrop and Governor Harry Vane, and the crowd's allegiance was swung to Winthrop by the eloquence of the Reverend John Wilson, minister of the First Church in Boston, who sprang up into the tree and from its branches persuaded them. Near the old house, north from it, stood the elm tree where, in 1740, George Whitefield ("that great model of theatrical grace and elegance, of harmonious oratory and at the same time of fervent piety"),[1] forbidden any church in Cambridge, gathered large audiences for his condemnation of the New England clergy, and of Harvard College for its low standard of morals. The result was a "general shak-

1. W. C. Ford (ed.), *Statesman and Friend; Correspondence of John Adams with Benjamin Waterhouse.* Boston, 1927.

CAMBRIDGE COMMON AND SURROUNDINGS

1856

ing of dry bones in town and college." Near the northwest corner of the Common Lands stood the gallows where, in 1755, a man was hanged and a negro woman burned at the stake — in her case a concession to modesty, as the penalty for "petit treason," of which she was accused, was to be "hung, draun and quartered." In September, 1774, startled eyes saw from the windows of the Prentice house two thousand men of Middlesex collect on the Common to demand and enforce the resignation of the Crown officers, and here gathered the men from farm and workshop all over New England to make the first Revolutionary Army. On the Common they formed to check Lord Percy's return from Concord and Lexington; here the troops received marching orders for Bunker Hill; here was the Army's encampment when Washington took command; nine thousand militia were in tents here, as well as in Christ Church and the Harvard College buildings. The elm which tradition connects with Washington's taking command of the Army stood before the Prentice door. Near by, the "Great Union" flag was first raised — crosses of St. George and St. Andrew combined with thirteen stripes. In 1789, when President Washington made a New England trip, he was here welcomed with salvos of artillery. The sagging roof-supports of the Prentice homestead may have dropped a few feet at that! By the

passage of one hundred and fifty years, the lonely lot of land near the "pallysadoe" was now at the centre of the town's life.

In 1806, John Prentice of Londonderry sold his land and the remnant of the house to Nathaniel Ireland, husband of his niece Sally Prentice. Ireland was a prosperous artisan of Boston, provider of ironwork for ships. With him begins a new period for Guy Bambrige's land.

II

Ireland's Folly and the Scholar

(1806–1818)

NATHANIEL IRELAND paid twelve hundred dollars for the Prentice homestead and there built in 1807 a noble red-brick house, which, though with many changes, still stands as Fay House of Radcliffe College. It embodied the post-revolutionary taste and the ideas of Charles Bulfinch. The Revolution had brought a great change in architecture, a cleavage from English standards, an admiration for the French. The classical revival in American architecture and a concern for convenience in living are both due to French influence. Bulfinch had made a tour of France in 1796 and was strongly influenced thereby. Although there is no record of private houses designed by him, authorities assign to him several. The bay, the oval room in the rear, the circular stairway, the secluded stairway — all these are characteristic of the period, of Bulfinch, and of the old Fay House, Ireland's gesture of prosperity. Of Fay House, Charles A. Place, in his *Charles Bulfinch, Architect and Citizen*, says: "There is a Bulfinch tradition, but as yet no

evidence. His influence, however, is unmistakable." The entrance was originally on Mason Street, the northwest side of the house, instead of on the northeast front, as at present. The beautiful oval room at the rear looked out on garden and orchard. The circular stairway, which was later removed, was probably at the rear of the house. The oval bay rose above the parlor, including an oval bedroom. The transverse hall, ending, on Garden Street, in a second bay, may have been elliptical. In the early Republic, laymen and architects alike avoided a visible roof. The roof of Ireland's house was flat, over the second story, and edged by a balustrade. The material of houses of this type, all of them dating before 1810, was brick. By 1830, when the vogue of stucco had begun in the South, New England painted the brick houses gray to imitate the effect of stucco. The beautiful redbrick of the Ireland house, laid in running bond, was thus painted and has only recently been restored. Place, in his work on Bulfinch, especially notes the beauty of the mantle-pieces in the two rooms opposite the oval rooms.

Nathaniel Ireland was a young man, only twenty-eight years old and married but four years, when he gave this evidence of his success. Though his trade was carried on in Boston, he was both baptized and married in the First Parish Church of Cambridge, and

must have had pride in thus establishing himself in the community of his birth. It was a small place yet, with a social life dominated by Harvard College. Perhaps young Mrs. Ireland hoped to enter that society through her beautiful oval "saloon." Surely that doorway, opposite the College, must have been entered on masquerade night. "It may surprise many," wrote Caroline Howard Gilman, in her *Poetry of Travelling in the United States*,

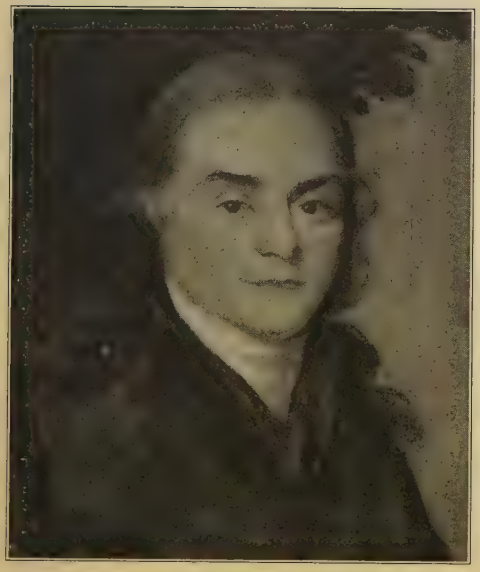
> but it is a fact, that masquerades in college, exclusively confined to the students however, were permitted as an annual amusement so late as 1809. The maskers felt themselves authorized to enter any house, under any disguise they chose, throughout one appointed evening. There might be seen the Cambridge girls, usually so retired, dressed with more than usual care in the slight ornaments of their unpretending wardrobes, while unannounced soldiers entered and knelt at their feet; fortune-tellers gazed on the lines of their extended hands; Indian chiefs brandished their hatchets in their quiet parlors; pretended Frenchmen, with snuff and broken phrases, raised easy laughter; lumbering Falstaffs, who had despoiled their beds of pillows, came glorious with clumsiness instead of wit; while here and there a youth betrayed himself by an amphibious bow, in attempting a courtsey as a fair maiden.

But whatever the dreams that Nathaniel and Sally Ireland enjoyed in their hopeful and ambitious youth, they had a sudden and sad awakening.

Jefferson's embargo proclamation, in 1807, paralyzed commerce all over the country. Great and

small failed alike, and Ireland's fortune collapsed with the rest. In 1809 he had mortgaged his property, and it passed from hand to hand until sold at auction to Joseph McKean in 1814. Ireland and his wife ended their disappointed days in a small wooden house at the corner of Brattle and Mt. Auburn Streets, on the outskirts of the town. Mr. John Holmes is quoted as saying that as he was going through Cambridgeport he saw a bent figure making its difficult way along the street. Mr. Holmes, with his accustomed friendliness, asked the old man who he was and whither he was trying to go. He found that it was Mr. Ireland, and telling him that he was in no condition to walk to his home, he started him home in a chaise. A feeble, poor old man — sad ending to that ambitious and hopeful youth.

With Dr. Joseph McKean the property took on a new aspect; for this owner was a distinguished teacher, preacher, and scholar. He was born in Ipswich, Massachusetts, in 1776. A precocious child, active and vivacious, he was ready for Harvard College at fourteen years old, after training at Andover Academy, and graduated at eighteen, in 1794. At Harvard he distinguished himself in classics and mathematics. The vivacity of his youth, as well as of his intellect, had full play. The tradition remains of the sensational "McKean's Leap," to escape a proc-



JOSEPH McKEAN

tor, from a window in Hollis Hall to one in Stoughton Hall, and he is remembered by many a Harvard man as the founder of the Porcellian Club. The Centennial publication of this organization states:

In the year 1789, and doubtless for some time previously, there existed in Harvard College an organization called by its members *The Argonauts*, and sufficiently formal to meet every alternate week for the enjoyment of an impromptu supper. . . . Joseph McKean, who in 1791 entered the college, was almost immediately received into this band of Grecians. . . . How quickly and willingly his influence was recognized is shown by his creation of this Fraternity, under the title of "The Pig Club," in the year 1791, when it fell to him in turn to offer an entertainment to *The Argonauts*, at which he presided and furnished the table with a young pig, roasted whole, which he had with infinite dexterity concealed in his room until it was fit to sacrifice upon the altar of Conviviality.

The Transactions of the Colonial Society of Massachusetts contain a letter from one Amos Kent to his brother Moody Atherton Kent, in which he wrote:

You tell me you have lately been invited to become a member of the porcelian, or pig club & request my opinion of it & whether it would be eligible to join it. The history of the club is short, & I will endeavor to give you a short sketch of it. About two years before I was [initiated] a number of persons were dining together on saturday afternoon, at a public house then kept by a Mr. Moore. After the bottle had circulated pretty lively a few hours, it was proposed, that there should be another meeting of the same persons, at the same place, to dine upon the same kind of

food, which was roast pig, in a month from that time. It was immediately agreed to *nemine contradicente*, & another meeting was accordingly held. . . . At this second meeting, it appears some of the persons had thought of establishing a convivial club, for the purposes of eating & drinking, and when the glass had been round sufficiently often it was proposed; everyone present instantly joined heartily in the measure & a constitution & some few laws were soon after drawn up, by a committee chosen for the purpose. Additional members were invited by permission of the club and the society was thus established. The professed object of the club, so long as I was a member of it was enjoyment, & that kind of enjoyment to be derived from eating & drinking was the principal. It is pretended, you know, in all such cases, that the company of our friends is the principal inducement to such meetings. I have been led, however, to doubt the truth of such a pretention, since I have seldom, at college, found a number of friends much delighted with each other, for any length of time, without the aid of the bottle. . . . You ask me whether it would be desirable to join it. My opinion is this of all college societies. The society itself is not so much to be considered, as the persons who belong to the society. I would advise you to join every one to which you are invited, where the persons belonging to it are such as you would be pleased to associate with, I would join no other.

In relation to modern youth, it is to be remembered that McKean was then fifteen years old, and others of the group were probably no older. McKean is described as displaying in private and social life "the most endearing qualities of mind and heart," and "captivating powers and animated tone of conversa-

tion." But that he later differed from Mr. Kent in their encouragement is shown by his "attempt to disrupt the society on account of its conviviality." He entered the Congregational ministry and took the Milton parish. Already a scholar, he was one of the original eighteen life subscribers when the Boston Athenaeum was founded in 1807. Ill health led to his resignation from the ministry. Having regained strength by travel in the South, he accepted an offer of a professorship at Harvard. His acceptance of the Boylston Professorship of Rhetoric and Oratory made a Cambridge home necessary.

The Boylston Professorship had been founded in 1804 with funds from the bequest of Nicholas Boylston. The Honorable John Quincy Adams was the first Boylston Professor. In July, 1810, he had resigned "on account of a call in the foreign service of his country," and in August the Reverend Joseph McKean was appointed his successor in the distinguished position. A vote was then passed requiring the Boylston Professor to reside in Cambridge near the college. At this time William McKean, his father, held a mortgage on ill-fated Ireland's house, which Joseph rented from his father until 1814. He bought the property for $4,175 in that year. Here the gay young student, already sobered by illness and the work of the ministry, settled with satisfaction into the

scholar's life. Honors from colleges and scientific societies corroborated the high esteem in which Harvard held him. His keen mind reached out to the sciences and philosophy, as well as to the classics. He had time, in that leisurely day, for antiquarian research and collections. The walls of the home built by the self-made young artisan were now lined with a scholar's library. To its collection and study he must have turned "that enthusiasm in his constitution which prompted him to pursue with ardour the enterprises in which he was engaged." Would that he had stretched his enthusiasm to his lectures! The romantic and sensitive young Samuel Gilman, whom we shall find later in Fay House writing "Fair Harvard," was, in 1811, a "resident graduate," as students of Divinity were called before the Harvard Divinity School was set apart as a professional school of the University. He thus wrote his opinion of Professor McKean:

Friday, November 15, 1811. Mr. Mc Kean delivers a lecture every other Friday on Rhetoric, Composition, Eloquence, &c. To those who witnessed the extraordinary powers of his predecessor, our present Rhetorical professor holds not out many allurements. Mr. Mc Kean professes to hate and despise the whole business of lecturing. He thinks no instruction can possibly be gained by it. Perhaps this may be one reason, why his own lectures are uncommonly dull and uninteresting. He writes merely from duty. He

fills his page, goes to the chapel at the call of the bell, reads it; and receives his salary. Yet after all, these eked out pages exhibit much study; I will not say reflection. The opinions of many authours are brought together; sometimes interesting citations are made; but the lecturer can never himself be eloquent. It is true he often strains exceeding hard to dazzle us; but our eyes are only played upon by reflection, as it were, from tin. We are neither grossly offended, nor highly delighted. His lecture of to-day was upon tropes and figures. I attended pretty closely, but for my life cannot now recal (10 o'clock eve) a single idea. I do indeed remember that a great deal was said about burning anger and joyful cornfields; but further remembereth not — Mr. McKean's to serve.[1]

Perhaps the professor was more at ease in the pulpit, for Mr. Gilman quotes ten-year-old Elizabeth Foster, in response to his question as to where she went to church: "The meeting in Chauncy Place, Sir, where Mr. McKean and Dr. Ware preach. O, what a piercing eye Mr. McKean has got. O, I declare, I sometimes think he will look me right through. But he is a beautiful preacher; he speaks so distinct and so plain."[2]

While studious quiet now distinguished the dignified house, gay scenes passed outside on the Common. Caroline Gilman in her *Recollections of a Southern*

1. Letters and Papers of Samuel Gilman in Harvard College Library. *Archives of Class of 1811.*
2. *Ibid.*

Matron, thus described its usual aspect and the contrast on Commencement Day:

It required no little circumspection to thread the mazes of the Cambridge common on commencement-day. At one moment they justled against a square-capped professor; at another came in contact with a crowd around a merry-andrew; now a gowned orator, with his colored ribbon or medal, the badge of a society, swept by; and now they were impeded by flocks of children hurrying to the booths for confectionery; here was a mob of rioters simply kept from violence by constables, and there pressed a bevy of laughing girls in the airy dress of a ball-room, escorted by young collegians.

The excitement was increased by the ordinarily quiet habits of the Cambridge residents. Over that wide, open common, then diversified only by a few graceful elms, usually brooded the deepest silence and monotony, scarcely interrupted by the thoughtful student conning to the air his appointed task, or the laggard hurrying to his recitation. And the airy-decorated figures of the city ladies were equally opposed to the simple costume of the Cambridge girls. Indeed, until within a few years, one might almost know a Cambridge lady by the plainness of her attire and the absence of external accomplishments, contrasted with the cultivation of her mind.

The boisterous scene lives for us again in Oliver Wendell Holmes' words:

In the last week of August used to fall Commencement day at Cambridge. . . . Commencement was a great occasion all through my boyhood . . . what a time it was for us young Cantabrigians, born under the shadow of the

College walls! It was a holiday for Boston as well as Cambridge, and what we cared for was the glitter of the cavalcade, the menagerie, and other shows, and above all the great encampment which overspread the Common, where feasting and dancing, much drinking, and some gambling used to go on with the approving consent of the Selectmen, — such was the license of the "good old times." But the year had nothing for us boys like "the tents." Tuesday night was to us like the evening before Agincourt. We heard the hammers late in the evening, we heard them early in the morning, as we looked out of the west window to see if "the tents" were going to spread over as wide a surface as in other remembered years. The sun crawled slowly up the sky, like a golden tortoise, — how long a day was then! At last the blare of a trumpet! The Governor was coming, guarded by his terrible light-horse troop, protected too by his faithful band of mounted truckmen from Boston, sturdy men on massive steeds, in white frocks, all, a noble show of broad shoulders and stout arms.

Let those who will go into the old yellow meeting-house to hear the "parts" spoken; for us rather the gay festivities of the booths and the stands, where the sovereigns are enjoying their royal feast, as they have done since the time when they used to be ferried over the river and come round by Charlestown. Behold! Store of pork and beans; mountainous hams, thick-starred with cloves all over their powdery surface; the round of beef; the dainty chicken for the town ladies who sit fanning themselves on benches beneath the dingy sail-cloth awnings. Nor be forgotten the pie of various contents, the satisfying doughnut, nor the ginger-cake, hot in the mouth. The sad oyster summoned untimely, for there is no *r* in August properly spelled, lies naked in the sunny saucer, waiting to be swooped up by undiscriminating rustics, to whom the salt-sea mollusk in

his most demoralized condition is always the chiefest of luxuries. The confectioner is there with his brass scales, and Richard Gunn, — O my coevals, remnants of yourselves, do you remember Richard Gunn and his wonderful toys, with the inscription over them, awe-inspiring as that we recollect so well in the mighty Tuscan's poem?

"Look, but handle not!"

The fair plain, not then, as now, cut up into cattle-pens by the ugliest of known fences, swarmed with the joyous crowds. The ginger-beer carts rang their bells and popped their bottles, the fiddlers played Money Musk over and over and over, the sailors danced the double-shuffle, the gentlemen from the city capered in lusty jigs, the town ladies, even, took a part in the graceful exercise, the confectioners rattled red and white sugar-plums, long sticks of candy, sugar and burnt almonds into their brass scales, the wedges of pie were driven into splitting mouths, the mountains of ham were cut down as Fort Hill is being sliced today; the hungry feeders sat, still and concentrated, about the boards where the grosser viands were served, while the milk flowed from cracking cocoa-nuts, the fragrant musk-melons were cloven into new-moon crescents, and the great watermelons showed their cool pulps sparkling and roseate as the dewy fingers of Aurora. Then and there I saw my first tiger, also Joseph Ridley the fat boy, and a veritable Punch and Judy, whom I would willingly have stayed to see repeating their performances from morning to night.

It was the end of August, you remember, and the peaches were ripe, and the early apples and pears, and, chief among the fruits of the season, that bounteous one which a College poet thus celebrated in the year 1811:

"The smaller melons go for each one's need,
The children have them, or they go to seed;
But this great melon waits Commencement day,
Mounts the tall cart, to Cambridge takes its way;
There, proud conclusion of its happy days,
A graduate's palate murmurs forth its praise."

So sung Edward Everett, Senior Sophister, aged seventeen.

The Common was not spacious enough for the multitude. The old churchyard was often invaded and its flat tombstones were taken possession of by small parties as tables for their banquets. The proud Vassal tablet was a favorite board for the revellers, and many a melon gaped and scattered its seeds over its brown freestone. Many a group feated and laughed around the slab where the virtues of a deceased President were embodied in Latin which might have frightened the bravest Roman, but which threw away its terrors upon them.

Thus the summer used to die out in a blaze of glory for us, the boys of Cambridge, in the first quarter of this present century.[1]

Joseph McKean is reported as of "sincere and extensive hospitality." We may imagine how many a guest for the Commencement exercises must have looked out at this gaiety from the windows of the oval room, commanding both Garden Street and the Common, which was his dining-room. Its contents as shown by the inventory of the house must, however, have left small room for the guests, for it contained, besides the Pembroke table, a "lolling chair"

1. Oliver Wendell Holmes, *Pages from an Old Volume of Life*. Boston, 1893.

and two dozen mahogany chairs set upon its carpet and "rugg," with waiters and trays, plate heater and footstove. Two pictures, one large painting and three small ones hung on the walls; gilt china and painted china, silver ladle and porringer, and silver tumblers were in cupboards. In spite of McKean's corresponding secretaryship of the Society for the Suppression of Intemperance, twenty wine glasses, recalling Porcellian days, were waiting in the cupboards for the "two barrels of cyder" and "1/4 cask wine" that stood in the cellar! In the dining-room also stood his chronometer, magnet, and mathematical instruments, to which perhaps he turned during meals as many a New England family has feasted simultaneously on food and dictionary. The bedrooms held mahogany bedsteads with feather beds, counterpanes, and drapery. In the oval bedroom was a trundle-bed for the next-to-youngest — but the nursery was over the warm kitchen with bedstead, feather-bed, bolster, straw-bed, crib, cradle, and two cot bedsteads. The library, probably at the right of the Mason Street entrance, contained a large bookcase with glass doors as well as high bookcases and shelves reaching perhaps to the ceiling since there were "study steps," a desk barometer, a thermometer, an hourglass, and the two busts which were the inevitable furnishing of a scholar's library at that time; while a coin cabinet, money

scales, and chess and backgammon boards reflected the personal tastes of the owner.

One of his daughters, Amy Elizabeth, carried on the scholarly tradition by marrying Joseph Worcester, the lexicographer, who took his bride to Craigie House in 1841, allowing Mr. Longfellow to retain the room he had occupied in Mrs. Craigie's day. In the house now numbered 121 Brattle Street, built by Dr. Worcester, he finished the great *Universal and Critical Dictionary of the English Language* which cost both him and his wife their eyesight. Thomas Wentworth Higginson, in *Old Cambridge*, describes him when a visitor at the Higginson home:

> Among the various academic guests who used to gather in my mother's hospitable parlor on Sunday evenings, no figure is more vivid in my memory than . . . Dr. Joseph E. Worcester, whose "Elements of History, Ancient and Modern" I had faithfully studied at school; and who was wont to sit silent, literally by the hour, a slumbering volcano of facts and statistics, while others talked. He was tall, stiff, gentle, and benignant, wearing blue spectacles, and with his head as it were ingulfed in the high coat collar of other days. He rocked to and fro, placidly listening to what was said, and might perhaps have been suspected of a gentle slumber, when the casual mention of some city in the West, then dimly known, would rouse him to action. He would then cease rocking, would lean forward, and say in his peaceful voice: "Chillicothe? What is the present population of Chillicothe?" or, "Columbus? What is the population of Columbus?" and then, putting away the

LIBRARY OF MOUNT SAINT MARYS COLLEGE

item in some pigeon-hole of his vast memory, would relapse into his rocking-chair once more.[1]

The scholar's health again failed, and McKean left home for a milder climate, dying at Havana in 1818, at the early age of forty-two. In the settlement of the estate, the library of "rare, curious and valuable" books was sold at auction at "No. 93, Court-Street, Boston, next door to Burditt's Book-Store . . . Conditions — CASH, Boston Money." It included many sermons which McKean had valued as "exhibiting generally the prevailing religious sentiments, political opinions and literary taste of the times."[2] Auctions scatter books beyond following — where are now the *New Testament in Chinese* and the *Grammar of the Chinese Language*, printed at Serampore in 1805, and sent to Dr. McKean by the Reverend Robert Morison? Morison wrote that it was "with great difficulty that he could transmit them, as there was a jealousy in suffering them to go out of the country." The catalogue of this "select library" stated that there was only one other copy of these books in America. The Library included a first edition of Cotton Mather's *Magnalia Christi Americana* and early editions of the classics. Many friends were among the purchasers;

1. *Old Cambridge.* New York, 1900.
2. *Catalogue of the Select Library of the Late Joseph McKean.* Boston, 1818.

Frothingham, Norton, Holmes, H. Lee, J. Dana, William B. Shaw, Ware, Hedge are mentioned in the records of the sale.

The young widow, for whose benefit this library must be sold, needed more financial aid than that would yield. The *Columbian Centinel* for September 19, 1818, and for five successive issues, advertised the auction of a "lot of LAND, containing about one acre [still Guy Bambrige's "i ackr"], with a new large and convenient brick Dwelling House, a Barn, Out Buildings, and a Garden, containing a large number of the best kinds of young Fruit Trees. . . . Also — PEW No. 3 in the south part of the Eastern Gallery in the Rev. Dr. Holmes' meeting-house." Of that prosperous orchard but one apple tree remains today. The spirit of McKean the scholar must look approvingly at the Radcliffe students who now read under its dwindling shade!

John Rynex, who bought the house and land for $3,975, mortgaged it several times. It passed in March 1831, to Henry Higginson, as trustee for the children of Stephen Higginson of Cambridge, and in the following October Stephen Higginson, who was bursar of Harvard College, bought the property for $4000. On the same date, Harvard College took a mortgage for $5000 for three years at five per cent. This mortgage was paid off in June, 1835, leaving the

title clear. Mr. Higginson did not live in the house himself. Thomas Wentworth Higginson, his son, has given delightful reminiscences of his home at the head of Kirkland Street and of the quiet little college town of this period.

Between the death of Professor McKean and this date, 1835, when the dignified red brick mansion became the Fay Homestead, for fifty years the home of Judge Samuel Prescott Phillips Fay and his family, several interesting tenants carried on the scholarly and hospitable traditions of the house — as the next chapter will show.

III

Bird in a Cage, School and Castle Corner

(1819–1835)

THAT "Senior Sophister," Edward Everett, whose verse Oliver Wendell Holmes quoted in his description of Harvard Commencement, had entered Harvard from Exeter Academy at the age of thirteen, and had graduated in 1811. After two years as a student of divinity, he took charge of the Brattle Street Church in Boston. Though he was but nineteen years old "as a public orator . . . no preacher in this community was heard with greater admiration and delight." [1] In 1814, a foundation for a professorship of Greek literature was created at Harvard by Samuel Eliot, grandfather of the late President Charles W. Eliot. This professorship was offered to the young minister of twenty and was accepted by him with the proviso that he be permitted preliminary study abroad. He went at once to Göttingen, where he spent more than two years. He was soon followed by two other Harvard graduates, George Bancroft and Joseph Green Cogswell, and by George Ticknor

1. Frederic Henry Hedge, *Discourse on Edward Everett.* Boston, 1865.

of Dartmouth. Professor William Watson Goodwin, of Harvard, has described in the Transactions of the Cambridge Historical Society the resultant influence on American scholarship.

> All four of these scholars soon returned to Harvard, and it is hardly possible now to imagine the startling effect which this sudden importation of new ideas from the famous seat of German learning must have produced at that early day in our quiet college. Strange to say, the *permanent* result of this wholesale importation of German ideas appears to have been but slight. . . . Harvard was certainly not *Germanized* by this revolution. Perhaps the best indication of the new spirit inspired by this brief reign of German influence at Cambridge is to be seen in the syllabus of Professor Everett's lectures on Greek Literature. The high scholarship and the deep erudition shown in these lectures plainly indicate what our American students found at Göttingen.

Everett travelled widely in Europe as well. He spent a winter in Paris, a spring in England, a winter in Italy, and visited Prussia, Saxony, Holland, Albania, Greece, Hungary, and Austria. In 1819 he returned to the professorship that had waited almost five years for him. He gave but one course of lectures, with hours for consultation, but repeated his lectures before large Boston audiences.

He established himself in "the brick house with a bow window" which stood on Cambridge Common. In that village of wooden houses, Ireland's brick home was still conspicuous. As described in the

EDWARD EVERETT

Portrait by Gilbert Stuart, 1821

McKean auction notice, it was "from its central location, and its proximity to the Colleges, one of the most pleasant and eligible situations in Cambridge, for a . . . literary gentleman." Everett was a glorious apparition in staid Cambridge. Ralph Waldo Emerson, then a junior at Harvard, writing later of his idol, when admiration had changed to critical disagreement, could still say:

> There was an influence on young people from the genius of Everett, which was almost comparable to that of Pericles in Athens. He had an inspiration which did not go beyond his head, but which made him the master of elegance. If any of my readers were at that period in Boston or Cambridge, they will easily remember his radiant beauty of person, of a classic style, his heavy large eye, marble lids, which gave the impression of mass which the slightness of his form needed; sculptured lips; a voice of such rich tones, such precise and perfect utterance, that, although slightly nasal, it was the most mellow and beautiful and correct of all the instruments of the time. . . . The word that he spoke, in the manner in which he spoke it, became current and classical in New England. He had a great talent for collecting facts, and for bringing those he had to bear with ingenious felicity on the topic of the moment. Let him rise to speak on what occasion soever, a fact had always just transpired which composed, with some other fact well known to the audience, the most pregnant and happy coincidence. It was remarked that for a man who threw out so many facts he was seldom convicted of a blunder. He had a good deal of special learning, and all his learning was available for the purposes of the hour. It was all new learning, that wonderfully took and stimulated the young men. It

was so coldly and weightily communicated from so commanding a platform, as if in the consciousness and consideration of all history and all learning, — adorned with so many simple and austere beauties of expression, and enriched with so many excellent digressions and significant quotations, that, though nothing could be conceived beforehand less attractive or indeed less fit for green boys from Connecticut, New Hampshire, and Massachusetts, with their unripe Latin and Greek reading, than exegetical discourses in the style of Voss and Wolff and Ruhnken, on the Orphic and Ante-Homeric remains, — yet this learning instantly took the highest place to our imagination in our unoccupied American Parnassus. All his auditors felt the extreme beauty and dignity of the manner, and even the coarsest were contented to go punctually to listen, for the manner, when they had found out that the subject-matter was not for them. In the lecture-room, he abstained from all ornament, and pleased himself with the play of detailing erudition in a style of perfect simplicity. In the pulpit (for he was then a clergyman) he made amends to himself and his auditor for the self-denial of the professor's chair, and, with an infantine simplicity still, of manner, he gave the reins to his florid, quaint, and affluent fancy.[1]

Frederic Henry Hedge kept the same memory:

Those who have known the great orator only in his later efforts can hardly appreciate the fascination which he exercised on youthful hearers in his own youth. A measure of scholarly learning uncommon in this country at the time; a poetic fancy; extraordinary beauty of person; the rich tones of a wonderfully cadenced voice; graceful bearing; a dignity beyond his years; a certain fine and mysterious reserve,

1. Ralph Waldo Emerson, *Lectures and Biographical Sketches.* Boston, 1884.

which curbed, without impairing, the fervor of his discourse, — all this gave to his appearance and performance an ideal something, which seemed to denote a superior being, distinguishing him from all other speakers, not only in degree, but in kind, — something which brought to mind the Greek divinities of classic renown.[1]

Dr. Andrew Preston Peabody, in his *Harvard Reminiscences*, wrote:

> The timbre of Mr. Everett's voice resembled very closely that of the bells which have in their metal the largest proportion of silver. Several years ago, in listening to the bells of Moscow, which have the maximum of silver, and are kept ringing a large part of the time, I was perpetually reminded of Mr. Everett's oratory.

In addition to teaching and lecturing he undertook, in 1820, while living in Fay House, the editorship of the *North American Review*, then a magazine with a circulation languishing among five hundred subscribers. With ardor he threw himself into this enterprise, often writing for his life, as he himself described his effort, "with tired fingers, aching head, and a bad heart." He lifted the *Review* to a position, in forming opinion at home and in "reprimanding careless writers abroad," that made it the foremost critical journal in America.

But the brilliant young scholar who had received for five years abroad such vivid and varied stimuli,

1. Frederic Henry Hedge, *Discourse on Edward Everett.* Boston, 1865.

was not happy at Harvard. He wrote to Judge Joseph Story, on April 13, 1821:

> I find I am a poor professor. From the first week of my return hither, I saw that our university — as good I doubt not as the state of society admits — would furnish me little scope for the communications of the higher parts of ancient literature, and that a good grammatical driller, which I cannot consent to be, is wanted. But I find besides that the whole pursuit, and the duties it brings with it, are not respectable enough in the estimation they bring with them, and lead one too much in contact with some little men and many little things.
>
> In short, I die daily of a cramped spirit, fluttering and beating from side to side of a cage.[1]

He planned leaving Harvard, repaying the sums advanced by the College for his years of travel, and living upon the proceeds of the *North American Review*, which, he wrote, "will furnish me an ample support." But, first, he suggested that he move to Boston, as affording a wider social field. It is hard to realize the small size of the College in 1820. There were but 387 students in the College, Theological, Medical and Law Schools combined, and Everett had only 33 colleagues including the officers of administration. He had friends in plenty in that Boston to which only the slow stage could laboriously carry him. But the Overseers disapproved of nonresidence and voted, in May, 1822, "that it would be highly

1. Paul Revere Frothingham, *Edward Everett, Orator and Statesman.* Boston, 1925.

detrimental to the interests of the University to depart from the ancient usage of requiring the constant residence of those professors, whose offices, from the nature of them, are essentially connected with the necessary studies of the undergraduates." Stay in Cambridge he must. But he had seen a different future ahead. On February 13, 1820, he had preached in Washington, in the Chamber of the House of Representatives, and had swept with enthusiasm the Congressmen, Senators, Justices, and members of the Cabinet. Dull indeed must have seemed the village and the young minds in his classes, on his return! When he married, in 1822, he wished no home, with its suggestion of permanency, but took his bride to Craigie House, in Brattle Street, then the most fashionable and expensive boarding house in Cambridge. Indeed Mrs. Craigie had won the title of "Miriam the Profitess." At Harvard Commencement in 1824, he gave the Phi Beta Kappa oration, before Lafayette, and on that day started a tradition of literary demonstrative oratory. His political life swung him beyond the professorial orbit, as Representative, Governor, Ambassador to England, Secretary of State, and Senator. Later, he was again at Harvard for seven years as President. If he looked at the fair brick house where his professorship began, he saw that

"cage" of his ambitious and restless youth, from which his beating wings had escaped.

An excellent example of the contrasting color which differing temperaments may give to the same scene is clear in the comparison between Everett's "little men" and "little things" and Thomas Wentworth Higginson's picture of Cambridge in 1820:

> Cambridge . . . was in many respects a very pleasant place in which to be born and bred. It was, no doubt, in the current phrase of the day, "provincial"; in other words, it was not one of the two or three great capitals of the civilized world; but there are few places in any country which bring together a larger proportion of cultivated and agreeable families than must then have been found in this quiet academic suburb. . . . It needs only to mention some of the men who made Cambridge what it was between 1810 and 1830, to show that my claim for the little town is not too high. Judge Story, whose reputation is still very wide, was then the head of the law school, and in the zenith of his fame; the all-accomplished Edward Everett was Greek professor; English was taught by Edward T. Channing, who certainly trained more and better authors than any teacher yet known in America; George Ticknor was organizing the department of modern languages; George Bancroft was a tutor. The town in which these men lived and taught may have been provincial in population, but it was intellectually metropolitan; where McGregor sits, there is the head of the table. Moreover, by a happy chance, the revolutions of Europe were sending to this country, about that time, many highly cultivated Germans and Italians, of whom Harvard College had its full share. Charles Follen taught German; Charles Beck, Latin; Pietro Bachi, Italian;

Friedrich Gräter gave drawing lessons. England, too, contributed to the American Cambridge the most delightful of botanists and ornithologists — his books being still classics — Thomas Nuttall.[1]

When Everett left Cambridge for that brief residence in Boston which the Overseers of Harvard so summarily stopped, his mother and his sister Mrs. Derivage, with her two sons, remained in the house until 1824. Then Mrs. Francis Dana moved into the dignified red-brick house. Her father-in-law, the Honorable Francis Dana, was a typical representative of the Federal gentry of New England and held many public offices including those of Chief Justice of the Supreme Judicial Court of Massachusetts and Ambassador to Russia. Francis was baptized in Christ Church, the church of the "quality." His brother, Richard Henry Dana, was a poet of his day, better known as the father of the second Richard Henry, author of *Two Years Before The Mast.* The Dana mansion stood on the top of Dana Hill, then much higher than now, facing Massachusetts Avenue; and the present Dana Street was the driveway to the dignified and handsome house. All the land between Harvard College and Boston had originally belonged to the Danas and the Inmans, and when the estates were broken up the new streets were given family

1. Thomas Wentworth Higginson, *Margaret Fuller Ossoli.* Boston, 1885.

names or those of the families into which the sons and daughters had married — Dana, Inman, Ellery, Trowbridge, Kinnaird. There is a distinct flavor of the English landed gentry.

Francis Dana had married Sophia Willard, daughter of President Willard of Harvard. In 1824, she came without him to live in the house Edward Everett had vacated, and here her daughter Sophia conducted a school for girls with her mother and her sister, Mary Elizabeth, to help her. The classes were held in that oval room where McKean and Everett had dined. This room, with its deep seat at the window facing the Common, and its bay of three long windows reaching from ceiling to floor with inner wooden shutters that closed back as pilasters to match the beautiful mouldings, was a gracious influence for the young scholars. Two exceptions were made to the femininity of the classes — young Edmund P. Dana came as one of the family and little James Russell Lowell was permitted to come with his sister, riding down from Elmwood on his pony. The little boys sat on stools at either side of Sophia at the head of the table, James in an embroidered ruffled shirt with cuffs. Tradition tells of jam on his pinafore, for his mother was indulgent. Caroline Howard Gilman, whom we shall soon see at Fay House herself, has described how that Brattle Street,

down which the little boy's pony trotted, looked to her when her first "sally" from her bedroom, after the birth of her child, was a drive, as was the "common custom in New England." She saw "the beautiful sloping hills of Brooklyn, the sparkling fulness of Charles River emptying into the bay, the apple orchards filling the sense with gentle colours and odours, the sweet-briar throwing out its perfume at the very feet of passengers, the barberry bushes with their delicate yellow blossoms, preludes to the scarlet fruit of autumn, and even the palace-like buildings, placed at almost regular distances along the road from Cambridge to Sweet Auburn."[1] Fortunate little James that the time had gone by for him to be adorned like the young mother's new-born baby, out riding with her, over whose "frilled cap" rose "a smart blue satin hat"!

The accepted education for girls of that period still laid chief stress on accomplishments. John Kingsbury, principal of a school in Providence, and ahead of his time, wrote thus of education in 1828:

> In addition to elementary branches, a little of History, a smattering of French, and a few lessons in painting or embroidery, were thought to be sufficient for the education of girls. The study of the Latin Language, of Algebra, of Geometry, and of the higher English branches, was intro-

1. Caroline (Howard) Gilman, *Recollections of a New England Housekeeper.* New York, 1838.

duced into a few schools out of the city of Boston, and it was thought visionary to attempt the study of them here. In fact it was hardly possible to avoid ridicule in making the experiment.[1]

The training given by the Ursuline nuns was in high favor, and the convent at Mt. Benedict, in Charlestown, Massachusetts, drew the daughters of people of position not only in and about Boston, but in Canada and the South. The education there gained was thus described by one of the pupils — Louisa Goddard (Whitney):

Among the foreign customs retained in the Ursuline School, which fascinated plain Protestants by its novelty, was the pleasant one of holding annually a high state-festival day, called "Coronation Day," just before the commencement of the summer vacation. On that day only, parents and guardians passed the limits of the parlor and were allowed admission to the school rooms. The music and dancing rooms were prettily decorated, and furnished with rows of seats, which were crowded with delighted elders, who forgot the heat of a July day in admiring the proficiency of the pupils in the accomplishments taught in the Convent. There were performances on the harp and guitar, as well as on the piano, by curled darlings dressed in the prescribed white frocks and pink sashes. Drawings, landscapes in India-ink, and fancy work were handed about, and high art was represented by theorem-paintings, Grecian ditto, and painting on velvet. There were part-songs, recitations, and little dramas performed; the results of the

1. Henry Barnard (ed.), *American Journal of Education*, vol. V. Hartford, 1858.

yearly examinations were made public; and last of all, there was a grand mustering of the white frocks and pink sashes on the platform, from the midst of whom a queen was chosen, not by her schoolmates, but by the Nuns.[1]

Probably the instruction given by Sophia Dana and her mother and sister did not differ much from that in the schools about them. Mrs. Dana and eighteen-year-old Mary Elizabeth supervised conduct and manners. Sophia, twenty years old, taught the children. But behind Sophia were traditions of scholarly work, and her mind was awake. Justin Winsor speaks of her classes in history, attended by Boston women, as quite a feature in woman's education of the day. That "burning enthusiasm, warm feeling and passionate will," which characterized her later, must even then have infused life into all about her. "To talk with her gave us strength for any effort," a friend of later years wrote of her. Her voice was low and beautifully modulated; her hands exquisite. "She was very tall but so graceful that there was no awkwardness from her great height. She seemed to float through a room," writes her niece, recalling days long gone by and remembering the very inflections of that lovely voice reading aloud stories to her as a child. So Sophia stood, in 1827, tall, graceful and elegant, in the oval room transformed from school-

1. Louisa (Goddard) Whitney, *The Burning of the Convent.* Boston, 1877.

room, to marry young George Ripley, who had graduated from Harvard the first scholar in the class of 1823, and had taught mathematics at Harvard while studying theology. He had written to his sister of his engagement:

> This connection, which is founded not upon any romantic or sudden passion, but upon great respect for intellectual power, moral worth, deep and true Christian piety, and peculiar refinement and dignity of character, promises, I think, to advance me in the best way in this life, and to aid me, above all, in the great end of life, the preparation for heaven. . . .[1]

In spite of these sentiments, George Ripley was a radical of the day. At his house was held the first meeting of the Transcendental Club. With Emerson and Margaret Fuller, he established the *Dial.* He and Sophia were among the founders of Brook Farm. Here Sophia taught history and modern languages, and took an active part in the deliberations of the "Council." In the division of labor, the laundry was her task. She often stood at the laundry tubs for ten hours, until those delicate hands were so injured that the fingers must be bandaged. No labor was too hard or too repulsive. And yet on the shoulders of George Ripley and Sophia fell also the responsibility of the social life of the Community, which centred

1. Octavius Brooks Frothingham, *George Ripley.* Boston, 1884.

every evening at the "Eyrie," where they lived, for conversation and music. To them, as well, came all the downhearted for cheer and hope through the six years of increasing discouragement. When the experiment ended, they moved to Flatbush, Long Island, where Sophia continued to teach. Not until much later did prosperity and ease come to them. Through many difficult years Sophia must have seen, tiny, bright-colored and still, as though through the wrong end of a telescope, those girlhood days as teacher in the oval parlor.

Through 1827 and 1828, the school continued in the house under that Amy McKean who later married Dr. Worcester. In 1829, the home where the spirited Sophia had met her romance was occupied by Mrs. Francis Channing, the sister of Stephen Higginson, and sister-in-law of William Ellery Channing. She was a woman of fine presence, keen mind and strong character, a powerful influence over her son, William Henry Channing, who lived with her. He graduated from Harvard College in 1829 and from the Divinity School in 1833. The foundation of his later ministry, "combining in singular union the ardors of Platonic orthodoxy with the freedom of rationalistic liberalism," was laid down in those years when his mother, in close sympathetic relation to him, welcomed his friends to her home. Professor McKean

would have listened in startled amazement to the discussions in the oval room, to the liberal religious and economic opinions of the young radicals.

In 1832, Daniel Davis, for thirty years Solicitor-General of Massachusetts, retired and moved from Boston to Cambridge. Though he was seventy years old, there were yet among his thirteen children young daughters for whom he must find a house suitable for hospitality. He chose the brick house overlooking the Common from under the shade of the Washington Elm, and lived there until his death in 1835.

The Solicitor-General had started life in 1762 on a Barnstable farm, on Cape Cod. But his father, though farmer, was also the first Judge of Common Pleas in Barnstable County, and young Daniel turned also to the Law. He studied in the office of Shearjashub Bourne of Barnstable, who, when his pupil had become prominent in the profession, would say with pride, "I took special pains with Daniel." Thus equipped, he put all his belongings on his back, mounted his horse, and rode into Maine, then a province of Massachusetts. In the village of Falmouth, later the city of Portland, he stopped and began a successful career. There was only one other lawyer in the county, and there were but four others in the whole state. He wrote later, "When I went into that country, in every part of which I have

discharged my professional duties, the face of it, the habits and manners of the people, and those circumstances which are peculiar to a new country, where all the institutions of society were disregarded and neglected, would form a picture that would astonish the present generation." In 1786 he made the long and dangerous journey through unbroken forest to Quebec, to marry Lois Freeman of Barnstable, sister to James Freeman, for fifty-four years pastor of King's Chapel in Boston. Their father was a merchant, established in Quebec and unable to return when the Revolution began. "His poor motherless babes" left in Barnstable, whom he pathetically describes to the obdurate Governor of Quebec, were old enough by 1780 to travel to him at Quebec, where Daniel Davis arrived to claim his bride and carry her back to Falmouth. He became Representative to the General Court, member of the Senate of Massachusetts, United States Attorney for Maine, Solicitor-General of Massachusetts, and President of the Board of Overseers of Bowdoin College. In 1804 he moved to Boston, and thence to Cambridge.

The same young Samuel Gilman who found Professor McKean's lectures dull has left a pleasant picture of Daniel Davis in a letter to his fiancée, Caroline Howard. The "Mrs. Fay" of the letter is her sister Harriet, later to be hostess of the Fay Homestead

when Mr. Davis died and Judge Fay bought the brick house:

Tuesday, February 11, 1812. A ball has this evening been given by a select portion of students. The company was honored and enlivened by the presence of Mr. & Mrs. Fay, the latter of whom was the only married lady except one in the room. The party was generally composed of young persons. Mr. Solicitor-General Davis was there, however, and figured away with the liveliest and the best of them. It was rather singular that the oldest gentleman and lady in the room were about the best dancers there; but it was so in very truth; for Mr. Davis and your elegant sister displayed more genuine grace and attracted more eyes than any other pair in the hall.[1]

The same gay spirit is recognizable in the description of him given by Harrison Gray Otis at a meeting of the Cape Cod Association in 1839.

I also formed the acquaintance of the then future Solicitor-General of the State; he was somewhat my senior, and assumed some little pretensions over his schoolmates in consequence of having been chief volunteer fifer to the Barnstable minute men: in the rudiments of which art, as well as of agriculture, he was instructed by a Patagonian sibyl, named Phillis, his father's servant, who taught him alternately to play the fife and plough potatoes.

Open-handed hospitality had marked the Boston family and was as characteristic of the Cambridge home. For three years the walls that had sheltered

1. Letters and Papers of Samuel Gilman, in *Archives of Class of 1811*. Harvard College Library.

scholarly and political ambitions echoed to gaiety and music. "Castle Corner" the house was now named. Thomas Amory of Boston in a poem of seventeen cantos, *Charles River*, recalled in the fourteenth canto memories of the hospitality of Castle Corner.

Proudly upon the steps of Holworthy,
Waved the gay banner of the Harvard corps,
Which, on its folds of silken blazonry,
The college arms, the State's, and nation's bore.
The skies were cloudless, and the stirring band
Awoke the echoes of the halls around,
Whose wrinkled fronts in pensive glamour stand,
Veiled by umbrageous trees that fleck the ground.
That flag, then gorgeous which all eyes observe,
Tattered, Porcellians sacredly preserve.

Our tasks as soldiers daintily discharged,
We marched along God's Acre, Appian Way,
To that grand mansion, recently enlarged,
Where maids uncloistered pass the livelong day;
Where they con Greek or cipher out a star.[1]
A cordial welcome greets us — each his guest —
From that proud form and leader of the bar
As then the mode, in rich apparel dressed.
Many among us to his friends well known;
Many whose sires he cherished as his own.

Within the rooms, the fairest of the fair,
The maid of frolic lip and laughing eye,
And buds and blossoms far beyond compare,
Brimming with mirth, not yet had learned to sigh;

1. "The Harvard Annex," at the time the poem was written, 1888; later Radcliffe College.

The choicest flowers from all the gardens round
Exhaled their fragrance on the autumn breeze,
The lovely salvia, then less frequent found;
Whilst martial strains from underneath the trees
Mingled their music with the gush of tone
From happy hearts that knew but joy alone.

Nor these alone the memories recalled —
Beside me sits the daughter of our host,
Whose thrilling song our choicest souls enthralled;
Fair dames and noblest men, our social boast;
Nor be forgot that honored Admiral,
Whose science pulsed the universe of space,
Who prompt responded at his country's call,
In naval annals won a foremost place;
Nor their sweet sister, by all saints impelled,
In art the guide, in wisdom few excelled.

The "honored Admiral" was Daniel Davis' son, Rear Admiral Charles Henry Davis. With those abilities which made his naval career distinguished he combined scholarly tastes and unusual charm of personality. He was a close friend of William Wetmore Story, of John Lothrop Motley, and of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. Henry Cabot Lodge, who married his eldest daughter, has described in his *Early Memories* Admiral Davis' noble appearance and courtly manners, his scholarly achievements, his grace, gaiety, and endearing qualities.

The "sweet sister, by all saints impelled," Margaret, was an accomplished dancer. Helen, of "thril-

ling song," had a magnificent voice and was acclaimed "the musical queen of Cambridge." In later years, successive hostesses made the house a centre of musical life. It was Helen Davis who began the tradition. Thomas Wentworth Higginson has described her in *Cheerful Yesterdays* as

> singing in the dramatic style then in vogue the highly sentimental songs that rent my childish heart, "The Breaking Waves Dashed High," "The Outward Bound," "Love Not," "Fairy Bells," "The Evening Gem," and dozens of others the slightest strain of which brings back to me after sixty years every thrill of her voice, every movement of her fine head. . . . I still recall the enchantment with which I heard, one moonlit summer night, the fine old glee, "To Greece we Give our Shining Blades," sung as a serenade under my sister's window by a quartette consisting of Miss Davis and her brother, of Miss Harriet Mills who afterward became his wife, and of William Story. I had never before heard the song and it made me feel, in Keats' phrase, as if I were going to a tournament.

Miss Ann Storrow, young Higginson's aunt, wrote a gay rhymed account of a ball at the Higginson home, then next door to Castle Corner, in 1840. Helen and Margaret Davis, still young and lovely, are thus described: "Helen Davis was brilliant, and pleasant as a bird, When after long winter its voice may be heard And Margaret, arrayed in white muslin, was seen As graceful as fairy that trips o'er the green."

A glimpse of the aspect of Castle Corner when the centre of so much hospitality is possible, for the house and furnishings were sold at auction by its owner, Stephen Higginson, when the Davises left. There were books on the walls — one hundred and fifty in the "west parlour" and two hundred in the "study." The "oval parlour" contained fourteen painted chairs with straw bottoms, six crickets, four footstools, and two rocking-chairs. Harriet Martineau, writing in 1838 her *Retrospect of Western Travel*, comments unfavorably on the universality of the American rocking-chair, declaring that "when American women come to live in Europe they sometimes send home for a rocking chair. A common wedding present is a rocking chair. . . . How this lazy & ungraceful indulgence ever became general I cannot imagine, but that nation seems so wedded to it that I see little chance of its being forsaken." Certainly not forsaken by Solicitor-General Davis, for in the "west parlour" were two more!

Mr. Stephen Higginson had made changes in the house when it passed into his hands in 1831. He had moved the entrance from Mason Street on the north to the middle of the eastern bay. He had taken down the circular stairway and had substituted for it a straight, steep flight directly in front of this entrance, a return to colonial tradition. The oval dining-room

of Professor McKean and Edward Everett, the school-room of Sophia Dana, now took the traditional place as parlor at left of an entrance. The library at right of the old Mason Street entrance became dining-room. It is probably due to him that the grey paint, then the fashionable New England substitute for stucco, covered Ireland's red brick walls.

Stephen Higginson's father was one of a long line of merchants prominent in Salem, Massachusetts, since 1630. He himself was Steward (later Bursar) of Harvard College. His activity of mind and sense of civic responsibility were expressed by interest in the building of the Divinity School and by the beautifying of the College Yard with elm trees and shrubs. His son, Thomas Wentworth, has recorded his father's Harvard connection, in a poem "Now and Then." After describing Stephen Higginson's losses through Jefferson's embargo whereby the rich merchant suffered as well as young Nathaniel Ireland, he wrote:

> My father struck his last lone flag; the college
> Whose modest benefactor he had been
> Prepared a calm retreat without his knowledge,
> Opened its kindly arms and clasped him in.
>
> He builded near this spot 'neath springtime airs;
> "Steward and Bursar" was his title given.
> 'T was when a few professors filled all chairs
> And said in Wordsworth's language "we are seven."

He planned a path to each professor's door
And placed a gate at every footpath's end;
Above each gate he hung a lantern o'er
To which each pair of learned feet might tend.

He planted elms, but then there came a frown,
And stern economy soon cast a blight.
The frugal college took the lanterns down
But left the trees to flourish as they might.

It cannot be said that Stephen Higginson's activity in changing Ireland's house was well directed. The loss of the circular staircase is regrettable. But the two-story bays to the east and south, so characteristic of Bulfinch's style, were secure from harm. At his death, in 1835, the property was sold at auction and was bought, for $4500, by Judge Samuel Prescott Phillips Fay. In the Fay family it remained for fifty years, a centre of such a rich life, of a hospitality open to so many interesting people, that its history claims a chapter to itself.

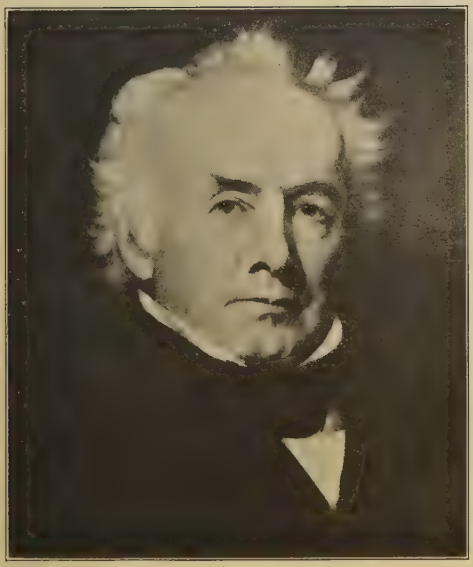
IV

Gentlemen of the Old School

(1835–1866)

IN 1835 Judge Samuel Prescott Phillips Fay moved his diminished family of wife and two little girls from Austin Street on Dana Hill in Cambridgeport, a select part of town, to his new house, standing on land lived upon for just two hundred years. It was a merry and vivid life that he brought to a spot already of varied experience in human beings. Mr. and Mrs. Fay had married in 1801, and four boys and a daughter had grown up in the hospitable Austin Street house, had married, or sought their fortunes. Maria and Eliza, only fifteen and ten years old, made as it were a new family. Judge Fay held a distinguished place in Cambridge life. The Fay family was originally French and claimed Sir Gauderner du Fay, Great Baron of Normandy, Victor Fay, one of Napoleon's generals and father of sons distinguished as ambassadors and authors, and Rudolph Fay, who married the daughter of Lafayette and, with his wife, shared Lafayette's captivity. According to one tradition the first Fay in England was that Rudol de Fay who accompanied the daughter of the Count of Mari-

anna when she married the son of King Henry II of England. Another tradition brings the Fays to Wales, as fugitives from the persecution of the Huguenots. But traditions agree that David was the first Fay to come to New England, about 1656. He came alone and poor, but bore a good character. He settled in Marlborough, but seems to have returned to England, or died, about 1669, for his son John grew up in the family of Peter Bent, from whom he had bought his land. John built a cabin on a side hill, accessible on one side only for safety from the Indians. This was preserved by his descendants until 1834 as their "ancestor's fort." He was evidently a leading citizen, being town clerk, assessor, moderator of town-meetings, and chosen to draw the Town's proportion of bills of credit from the Province Treasurer. He was Captain as well as magistrate. His character and attainments echo clearly in his descendant, Samuel Fay, who, just as John's "fort" vanished, made his home on the old wilderness way in Cambridge. For Samuel Fay was Captain, Judge of the Probate Court of Middlesex County for thirty-five years, an aide to Governor Gore, and a member of the Governor's Council from 1818 to 1819. In 1820 he was a member of the Convention for revising the Constitution of Massachusetts. For twenty-eight years, from 1824 to 1852, he served Harvard as a member of the Board



JUDGE SAMUEL PRESCOTT PHILLIPS FAY

of Overseers. In 1830, before Judge Fay was personally interested in the land about the Common, he, with Francis Dana and a few others, had fenced the untidy wasteland and put in paths, largely at his expense. An act of the Legislature, dated June 5, 1830, authorized its enclosure, abolished fourteen roads which, without legal right, crossed and recrossed the sandy barren land, and diverted two highways. One of these was that "ancient path" from Charlestown to Watertown upon which Guy Bambrige built, and Ireland raised his fair brick house. It now passed around the common-land, instead of across it, but swung past Ireland's house as before. The ground was now levelled, paths laid out, and trees planted, thanks to these public-spirited citizens. The bread cast upon the waters came back to Judge Fay when he later bought the house and looked out from its windows upon the land beautified.

Judge Fay inherited not only capacity for leadership and a sense of civic responsibility. The Gallic strain of artistry was reborn in him also, as his enjoyment of clothes, of society, and of music shows. His strong religious feeling made him a devoted worshipper and warden at Christ Church, the old Episcopalian Church nearby.

In 1801 he eloped with Harriet Howard, daughter of Samuel Howard, a shipwright of Boston. This

Samuel came home one night to his house in North Square and, pulling off his boots by the fireside, scattered upon the hearth tea-leaves, hastily swept into the blaze by the startled family. His name is among those of the Boston Tea Party, bound by oath not to reveal their identity. The secret was disclosed by their families after the Revolution. Before his death he had bought another house, on the opposite side of North Square, with second story jutting out over the lower, the small window-panes set in lead, in iron frames. The large garden reached nearly to Hanover Square and was the delight of Mrs. Howard. At her death, she left this house to her daughters, Caroline (Mrs. Samuel Gilman) and Anna Maria (Mrs. Abijah White), the latter being the mother of Maria, first wife of James Russell Lowell. Her wardrobe and furniture she bequeathed to Harriet, wife of Samuel Fay. This furniture later adorned Fay House, giving it beauty and dignity. North Square was then a select neighborhood and Harriet Fay always kept up a close friendship with her early neighbors, the Lathrops, Mays, and Reveres. An intimate friend of the Howard family was Benjamin Franklin. His favorite armchair, always called "the Franklin Chair," is still in the family of a descendant of Anna Maria White. Mrs. Howard had been a Lillie, a lineal descendant of Anne Hutchinson. Her uncle, Theophilus Lillie, a

rich royalist merchant in Boston, was mobbed in 1770 and fled later with other Tories to Halifax, leaving Boston the poorer for the loss of his carriage, the first kept in Boston, and of his stately figure walking the streets with gold-laced coat, wig and cocked hat, ruffles on his bosom and over his hands, and a gold-headed cane. He was burned in effigy in his scarlet coat and ruffles. Mrs. Howard's brother, John Lillie, however, was a Major on the Revolutionary side, aide to General Knox, and Military Commander at West Point in 1801. It was a tradition among the Howards that they were descended from the English Dukes of Norfolk. A grandniece relates:

> When I was a little girl, my mother took me to see "the old Miss Howards," my grandmother's cousins. The elder was over 90, deaf and blind. She remembered that her nurse used to say to her, "Fie, fie! You that's cousin to the Duke of Norfolk, with dirty hands!"

An account of the large family connection was written by Caroline Howard Gilman, for a private centennial celebration of the Boston Tea Party, in honor of Samuel Howard, held in December, 1883. The gay group of Howard descendants, all in appropriate fancy dress, and representing three generations, acted charades, sang, made speeches at a table that represented the events of the Tea Party, and danced the Virginia Reel.

This was characteristic of the Howard–Fay family. The young people, a second generation of twenty-seven cousins, grew up in a clan, with a family affection and loyalty that lasted all their lives. We see this exemplified in Maria Fay when she lived in Fay House as its sole owner, but never alone. Her nephews and nieces were always turning to her, in health for joy and in illness for comfort. Evening parties, composed of family connections only, with charades and music, were a family tradition. The "Fay Family" connotes no small unit in an apartment house, but a clan.

Harriet Fay's sister, Caroline Howard, was engaged when very young to Samuel Gilman, born in Gloucester, Massachusetts, in 1791, and studying at Harvard after his graduation there in 1811. Though engaged in 1811, the young people were not married until 1819, when Samuel Gilman was called to the Unitarian Church in Charleston, South Carolina, of which he remained the minister until his death in 1858. Through the first half of the 19th century, there were many and strong connections between South Carolina and Massachusetts. Ships from Salem and Boston drew up at Charleston wharves, and many a Southern boy came north to Harvard for his education, adding color and gaiety to the Puritan college. In 1811–12 Caroline was visiting in Charleston, and to

her the young student wrote in detail of his life in Cambridge. His comments on Professor McKean and Solicitor-General Davis have already been quoted. A few selections from his enthusiastic descriptions of the Samuel Fay household when on Austin Street follow:

Saturday, Nov. 2, 1811. After spending the whole day in Boston, I set out a little before dark, and came through Cambridge. . . . Called on your sister. . . . Your sister, O how I love and honour her.

Monday, Nov. 11, 1811. . . . The ceremony of confirmation has been performed by the Bishop of New England in the Church of Cambridge . . . about thirty were confirmed, among whom was your pious and amiable sister. During the service, I often glanced my eye at Mr. Fay's pew. Imagination would sometimes picture the devout attitude of one, who but a little while since stood there, and breathed her soul in love and gratitude to God. . . . Often as I thought I caught a glimpse of your sister, my heart would rise and swell with I know not what kind [of h]idden emotion. After church I went and spoke with Mrs. Fay. She extended her hand in a most kind and condescending manner.

Wednesday, Nov. 13. Drank tea this afternoon with the charming Mrs. Fay. I went there about four o'clock. Found no one in the par[lo]ur except the faithful dog. Opened a book that lay on the side-board, and read a few pages. I heard Mrs. Fay singing in [the] kitchen; and, how can I account for it? I judged from the tone of her voice that she was ironing! After a few thundering [. . .] at the door, I summoned Lewis, who summoned his mistress, who summoned a cheerful countenance, which su[m]moned my spirits, and we then sat an hour or two in sociable conver-

sation. She told me she had just finished ironing, be[in]g compelled to that duty by the absence of her maid-servant, who departed about a fortnight since, leaving Mrs. Fay and Lewis to do the honours of the kitchen, and Mrs. Fay and Mr. Fay to do the honours of the parlour. . . .

Saturday, Nov. 23. Called on your sister in my walk from Boston. . . . Each visit I make her, only serves to strengthen the ties of my affection for your family. When I come away, I find my intellect, manners, and heart improved.

Friday, Dec. 20. And how do you imagine I have passed this afternoon? I have been to share a favorite authour with a favorite fair, though you would have known that to be the case, had I simply told you that I had been reading Gertrude to Mrs. Fay. Is there any situation more honourable or more happy than to be the medium of communicating the delights of poetry and sentiment to the ears of intelligence, beauty, and goodness? Such has been my enviable lot this afternoon; and oh, Caroline, could you have heard the kind, the flattering, the benignant terms in which she addressed me, the sincere and unhesitating approbation which she allowed me in behalf of herself and your other friends and the kind assurances of her future esteem and regard you could not but have congratulated me on my inexpressible happiness.

Wednesday, Dec. 25. After the service I waded through the snow to your sister's. None of the family had attended church. On my arrival, I found that Mrs. Fay was afflicted with a severe cold, and that the lovely little Harriet was extremely sick. She has a swelling under her ears that occasions her mother some anxiety, and her spirits are not very elevated. They expected a large company to dinner; but except myself, no one was present. You can easily guess at the delight I have experienced. Unreserved socia-

bility, and sweet mutual converse diffused an enviable felicity over our little group. How gracefully did Mrs. Fay perform the honours of the table, how attentive was her partner to all its minutest duties; how politely did Master Howard drink his love and duty to everyone at table; how modestly and sweetly did Richard demean himself; how animated and vivacious was Charles; how silent and reserved Miss Harriet; and how supremely happy their delighted guest.[1]

Tuesday, Dec. 31. I was this morning just on the point of setting out for Boston, to dine there with Mr. Richard Sullivan . . . when I received the following billet from the hands of your nephew Howard, who had come up into town with his sled to procure something at Mrs. Bordman's. "My friends, Mr. & Mrs. White will dine with us to-day, and as the weather is fine, will you walk down and take dinner with us? They as well as myself will be much gratified to see you. Yours with sentiments of friendship and esteem, Harriet Fay."

I called on the respected writer of this billet on my way to Boston, and was inexpressibly glad to see your sweet sister, Mrs. White. . . . We then sat down to a charming apple-pie over the stand, it being then about 11 o'clock. Soon after, I left them with regret for Boston.

Sunday, Jan. 12. According to engagement, I went to Cambridge Port where I dined with our excellent [. . .] sister. Entering the room, I discovered only Charles and Harriet; the latter had her father's handkerchief tied around her head; they were both standing on a chair at the window. Of a truth, they were the most sober, silent, reserved couple that ever came across my optics. Not a word, scarce a smile, not a bow, scarce a look, could I take by

1. Howard was seven years old, Richard five, Charles three, and "Miss Harriet" one year old.

violence from them. After besieging them a short time, I turned round, and discovered an open book with its back up lying on the piano; turning it over, I found it to be Watson's Apology for Christianity against the attacks of Gibbon. Then, sitting down, and twirling its leaves a few moments, I saw Mr. Fay come in, who had been reading the book. We conversed a short time upon it, and then Mr. Fay employed himself in cutting the children's hair while I read Watson on Christianity. Soon after, Howard came freezing from church, where he had left his mother, who tarried at sacrament. The happiness of our group was at length completed by the entrance of the lady herself, who goodnaturedly chid us for suffering the fire to be so low. We had for dinner roast goose and alamode beef. I ate too much.

Wednesday, Jan. 22. Sweet creature, I have passed the evening with our brother and sister. I have played with them three games of chess. . . .

Wednesday, Feb. 5. For the first time since your departure, I this day visited Mr. & Mrs. White. It is seldom that I enjoy a day of so much happiness as this visit has afforded me. . . . Mr. & Mrs. White are as perfectly happy as you can possibly picture any married couple to be in this world. Indeed, if the most spotless female excellence on the one hand, and the most consummate goodness of heart, and irreproachable worth on the other hand, could be ever a source of conjugal felicity, our brother and sister at Watertown must enjoy that enviable lot. . . . One could not but feel elated in such delightful company. . . . Anna Maria has so many little ways like yours, so many *Carolinish* smiles, so many taking ways of expression, and so many movements which are the exact archetypes or the perfect copies of your own, that I cannot take my eyes off from her . . .

Thursday, Feb. 6. Another evening has been added to the list of happy ones, that have fortunately accrued to me from my connection with you. What do I not owe you, for thus introducing me to a family, where I am always sure to find an agreeable resort for relaxation from my studies, a kind reception, and the best company. In Mr. and Mrs. Fay's conversation and manners, I find all that elegance on which to model my own; all that friendship which sweetens the bitterness of my lot (slightly indeed thank God is it tinctured however) and that esteem, which makes me respect myself, and all that consolation which reconciles me (no, not quite reconciles me) to your absence.

Monday, Feb. 10. Dear Caroline, What an escape! It was only the day after I had made my farewell bow to Mrs. White of Watertown, that a son and heir was ushered into her happy family. . . . I first heard the news at Mrs. Fay's this morning . . .

Wednesday, March 25. I have spent the evening at Mrs. Fay's, who has given one of her Cambridge Port parties. . . . This party at least in one respect imitated nature; for it was arranged like earth and sky, the gentlemen sitting on one side, and the ladies on another. It is scarcely necessary to complete the image, and to say that Mrs. F. was the sun that so brilliantly illuminated our little horizon.

Saturday, April 18. As usual, I could not pass the house of your excellent sister without calling on her. I visit her about twice a week or oftener. Time diminishes not my respect for her. . . . She and her much-respected husband have given me such indubitable proofs of the goodness of their hearts, as well as the warmth of their friendship that I should be most ungrateful and insensible, if the second prayer of my heart did not ascend for Mr. and Mrs. Fay.[1]

1. Letters and Papers by Samuel Gilman, in *Archives of Class of 1811*. Harvard College Library.

In an old account book carefully kept by Judge Fay are many items of interest. Here are listed expenses for service: "Thomas Carleton came to live with me, April 2, 1822 at $8 a month . . . Phillip Moran came to work at 50 cents per day and 3 cents for liquor." The Judge bought a chaise for $180 and a gray mare for $100, a horse for $156. He was an enthusiastic horseman and must include that expense, as well as that for beer and wine. The Fays lived well. But the little book also recorded repeated loans and gifts of money, generous contributions to Christ Church, his son's bills and pocket money at Andover Academy, and tuition fees for music and dancing lessons for the daughters. He was a good father and a good churchman, as well as gentleman of the day.

The daughters' education stressed the accomplishments of music, painting, dancing, and languages. For a while the older daughter Harriet, born in 1810, went to that "Port School" where Margaret Fuller studied Greek in the middle of an eighteen-hour day of mental application. Thomas Wentworth Higginson wrote, in his *Life of Margaret Fuller Ossoli;*

> Margaret Fuller had a friend . . . in Miss Harriet Fay, now Mrs. W. H. Greenough, then living in the very next house at Cambridgeport and for a time her inseparable companion. Dr. Holmes has once or twice referred to this last fair maiden in his writings as "the golden blonde," and described vividly in his "Cinders from the Ashes" the

MRS. HARRIET HOWARD FAY

manner in which she won the hearts of all the school-boys. One of her especial attractions was a head covered with sunny curls, the free gift of nature; and it was believed by penetrating — that is, feminine — observers that the less facile ringlets for which Margaret Fuller's hair was kept in unsightly curl-papers all the morning were due to a hopeless emulation of her lovely friend. It was, in short, Madame de Staël and Madame Récamier in a school-room. At any rate, it is very probable that the early intimacy with these beautiful and attractive maidens had much to do with creating in Margaret Fuller that strong admiration for personal charms — amounting almost to envy, but never to ungenerous jealousy — which marked her life-time.

It is thus that Dr. Holmes described Harriet Fay:

Among my schoolmates at the Port School was a young girl of singular loveliness. I once before referred to her as "the golden blonde," but did not trust myself to describe her charms. The day of her appearance in the school was almost as much a revelation to us boys as the appearance of Miranda was to Caliban. Her abounding natural curls were so full of sunshine, her skin was so delicately white, her smile and her voice were so all-subduing, that half our heads were turned. Her fascinations were everywhere confessed a few years afterwards; and when I last met her, though she said she was a grandmother, I questioned her statement, for her winning looks and ways would still have made her admired in any company.[1]

To Harriet's graceful sentiment, it is said, is due the name "Sweet Auburn" given to the lovely hill and vale that became the cemetery, Mount Auburn.

1. Oliver Wendell Holmes, "Cinders from the Ashes," *Atlantic Monthly*, vol. XXIII.

Maria, five years younger than her sister, was sent to the Ursuline Convent at Mt. Benedict, Charlestown, near Boston. The Ursuline order of nuns, established in 1536 for the care of the sick and "superintendence of the education of female youth," had always had a high reputation. The Charlestown convent was popular among Boston families of position. The standard of education has been described here in relation to Sophia Dana's school, but a more detailed account of the convent and of its destruction is of value to show its influence on Maria Fay's childhood. She was at the convent for seven years, from six to thirteen years of age. One of her schoolmates, Louisa Goddard (Whitney) wrote, later, an account of the life at Mt. Benedict and of its sudden and dramatic ending. Her description of the convent life follows:

> The convent was built expressly for a boarding school, and intended for children of rich men, Protestants preferred. It was, for those days . . . an immense structure, perfectly furnished and appointed for the purpose; and a body of Irish Nuns, educated in French convents, were imported to give the instruction. Nearly the whole of Mt. Benedict was enclosed for the use of the Convent; there was a lodge, a Bishop's house, several terraced walks, and grounds tastefully laid out, for the recreation of the pupils. No such elegant and imposing building had ever been erected in New England for the education of girls. Picturesque, on the summit of the hill, with a background of

trees, and a foreground of green terraces bordered with shrubbery which descended to the road, its many-windowed façade, glowing in the light of the setting sun, was a sightly object to the good citizens of Boston, returning from their afternoon drive into the suburbs. . . . Pupils were allowed to spend only one Sunday a month out of the convent, with parents or guardians. . . . Sunday duties were defined in deference to Protestant prejudices; the pupils were expected to attend Morning Mass, but Protestants might read their own Bibles during the ceremony. Chapters were committed to memory Sunday afternoons. . . . The pupils were expected to dress in uniform; blue merino frocks, darker blue wadded pelisses, beaver bonnets trimmed with blue, was the wear for winter; and pink calico, as the best washable color, for summer, with white frocks for "best," black silk capes and aprons, and straw bonnets trimmed with pink. . . . Pink gingham garden-aprons and "cape-bonnets" were also insisted upon, and as many under-garments . . . as were then thought necessary for a bride . . . and such a fabulous number of stockings was required . . . an outfit of sheets, pillow-cases, towels, napkins, &c., was required of each pupil. The sole piece of finery admitted [was] a pink sash to wear with the white frocks.

The Superior . . . was of medium height and very stout, but she had the quick step and vivacious air of a French-Irish woman, and she carried herself with a royal uprightness and dignity that compelled deference from all who approached her. The sisters kept their eyes cast down and the muscles of their faces motionless.

School life in a foreign convent would have been no stranger — never to be alone, always to be under supervision. Each dormitory was occupied by sixteen girls; there were eight windows on each side and room for a little

white bed between every two, while a small wash stand stood under each window. The floor was carpetless, the windows curtainless, — each girl's trunk was placed at the foot of her bed. Very early in the morning Sister Mary Austin, our special guardian, appeared on the threshold where she crossed herself devoutly and began to recite aloud as she walked slowly down the aisle between the beds . . . dragging the bedclothes off them as she proceeded. There was only one moment of immobility and then every girl was out of bed, dressing and washing silently. Then in procession we went to the school-room for morning prayers of the Catholic Church. Then came the procession to the Refectory. . . . Dry bread, though excellent of its kind, and a full mug of milk for breakfast, dry bread and a bit of butter, with a glass of water for supper. One course at dinner — soup with vegetables one day, soup-meat mixed with vegetables on the next. Salt-fish ditto, or hasty-pudding and molasses, or rice-milk on Fridays and fast-days. . . . Sometimes for a treat we had each three or four dried and flattened prunes or figs, wizened to the size of beans. We had food for our souls if not for our bodies; at meal-times the older girls read aloud from the head of the different tables the Lives of the Saints. . . . After breakfast, the processions moved back to their several school-rooms and half an hour's recreation was allowed or rather the privilege of using the tongue for half an hour; there were no playthings or games. Then followed some hours of silence; the classes stumbled through their lessons. Then came more processions to and from the noon dinner and a short recreation period. In the afternoon were hours of silence; fancy work was pursued zealously. After tea there was another hour of profound silence enjoined while the nuns were at Vesper service.[1]

1. Louisa (Goddard) Whitney, *Burning of the Convent.* Boston, 1877.

Louisa Goddard had gone unwillingly to the Convent, and the vigorous individuality evident all through her account would never have adapted itself to the secluded and directed life. A more pleasant description is given by Lucy White Thaxter, Maria Fay's cousin, who "never found it other than a happy home and never experienced any other treatment than kindness and sympathy."[1]

This peaceful life had an abrupt end. Sister Mary John, the Mother-Assistant, had an attack of "brain fever." In delirium, she had run from the Convent in her nightgown and had been taken in at a neighboring farmhouse. Some passerby must have seen her, screaming and raving, when she was carried back to the Convent. Rapidly the story spread about Boston that an unfortunate nun had been disciplined by imprisonment in an underground cell in the Convent, had made her escape, and was dragged back in spite of frantic resistance. This story was believed by many. Dr. Lyman Beecher had aroused fears and passions by his violent condemnation of the "Devil and the Pope of Rome," in a course of lectures delivered at that time in Boston. He had denounced Convents as harboring depravity. At the same time, a book, entitled *Six Months in a Convent*, had just been published,

1. Lucy White Thaxter, *An Account of Life in the Ursuline Convent.* 1843.

in which an ignorant young woman, employed by the Convent as a seamstress and discharged, made dramatic accusations. The Boston truckmen, a well-organized guild of sufficient importance in the community to be chosen as Governor's escort on Harvard Commencement Day, held indignation meetings. So much feeling was aroused that the Charlestown Selectmen sent a committee to the Mother Superior, asking permission to investigate the vaults of the building that they might publish the innocence of the Convent and calm the public indignation. The Mother Superior was incensed and refused the request with violence and arrogance. A mob of rioters attacked the Convent at night when the terrified women and children were helpless. Bonfires were made of the fences and walls, and armed with stones and burning brands the rioters rushed upon the Convent. Among the cowering children, Maria Fay was called upon to take an active part, thus described by Louisa Goddard:

> Suddenly I heard voices calling out "Maria Fay, where is Maria Fay? The Superior wants Maria Fay," and I caught a glimpse of the Nuns urging that lovely young creature into a front room. I did not follow her, but I know that she was there seized upon by the Superior, and put forward as a forlorn hope by that poor lady and her terrified group of Nuns, at their wits' end for means to meet the coming destruction. I heard a window in that room thrown open;

and, running back to the post of observation I had just quitted, I was in time to catch a glimpse of Maria's head and body thrust out of the window so far that it was evident she was grasped from behind by some unseen hand, and to hear her youthful treble pipe forth: "Go away, go away! my father's a judge and he will put you all in prison." This address to the mob, of course, produced not the least effect, probably it was not even heard, but poor Maria had done her best; she was hastily jerked back by the hands that held her, and the window shut down.

The children and nuns fled from the back of the building. No neighbor would shelter them for fear of the pursuing mob. Finally Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Adams of Winter Hill, veritable good Samaritans, had the courage to shelter some of the frightened and weeping women and children and the cleverness to divert the rioters who did indeed follow the fugitives to their door. The intent of the mob was directed only against the nuns, for when the bedraggled, bewildered children were shepherded to Boston, in the daylight, a crowd of jeering, yelling men formed a rough but friendly escort. "We've spoiled your prison for you — you won't never have to go back no more." But the burned buildings and the destruction of all their possessions, the terror and the cold were the realities for the children. Three of them died from the effects of exposure and fright.

The outrage was investigated by a Committee upon which Judge Fay served. This Committee found "all

the stories affecting the humane, religious and moral character of the nuns" untrue. Richard S. Fay, counsellor-at-law, son of Judge Fay, presenting the case before a Committee of the House of Representatives, stated:

You have the statements of several who were present; they say that a few resolute persons, sanctioned by a little authority, could not only have arrested the progress of this riot, but every one of the rioters themselves. You have been told by credible and experienced witnesses, that there were engines upon the spot, firemen enough, and water at a convenient distance, to have quenched the fire, at any stage of it. You have been told that it was not done, that not one drop of water was thrown upon those "accusing flames." You have been satisfied, I am sure, that not one vigorous step was taken by any one to prevent this shameful transaction. The Chairman of the Selectmen of Charlestown, it is true, did advise the rioters not to bring a light, after they had broken into the building, that they had done enough to subject them to punishment, and that if a light were brought they would be seen and detected. This fatherly advice was not obeyed, and he, having weak eyes, and not being very well, went home to resume the peaceful slumbers from which he had been aroused. . . .

The testimony is, that thousands were present, but few were engaged in the work; that a few resolute men could have prevented the progress of the rioters for two hours; that the engines might have extinguished the flames; but there was no law of compulsion, and they could not be compelled to account for not doing it. The building was allowed to burn, the property to be plundered, and the rioters to stand triumphant over their work, and to pro-

nounce that it was well done. The glorious sun rose upon the blackened ruins, and lightened up a mournful sight, — the laws violated, humanity outraged, the cross, at least, an emblem of religion, trampled upon and broken. The beautiful grounds, over which but a day before, the innocent children had joyously trod, were all rooted up and defaced, and the flowers, that bloomed at the setting sun, fit emblems of their cultivators, lay there crushed and withered. We ask a remedy for this sacrilege and destruction, — will you send us to our action at law? . . .

The annals of American history present no parallel in atrocity, to that which was exhibited on the night of the eleventh of August last, upon Mount Benedict. The scenes of Indian barbarity never exceeded the ferocious conduct of the Convent rioters. And it adds to the horror of the act itself, when we reflect, that it was done in the sight of thousands, who looked upon the scene, from the beginning to its end, with a calm indifferent eye, and made no effort to protect the women and children, their property or their lives, who were thus cowardly beleaguered and attacked. . . .

The nuns took refuge in Quebec, where Caroline Gilman saw them, in 1836, and was received by them with warmth of gratitude for the share taken by the Fays, father and son, in their defence.

This must have been a terrifying experience for the little Maria. The fright and indignation with which the seven quiet years ended may well have fixed firmly in her character the ideals there taught. Certainly her whole life was distinguished by a strong sense of duty, an unceasing devotion to others. One

of her nieces, writing in retrospect of her beloved aunt in whom she could remember no faults, tells that

> at our house, 88 Mt. Vernon St. one room was always called "Aunt Maria's room" and she occupied it a good deal, delightedly welcomed by all. One year, when considered settled in it for the winter, she came to my mother and said, "Sarah, I am too comfortable, it is not right to have so much: I shall go to — (a niece), she has a teething baby and needs help" — and she went! She had . . . a marked ascetic streak which at times showed clearly in contrast to a decided enjoyment of the good things of life.

This is years after Louisa Goddard saw her:

> One lovely girl among the pupils, named Maria F—, had the face of a young Madonna, with a sweet, pure, still expression that made it a pleasure for me to look upon her, she seemed so peculiarly fit to be in a convent. Maria's looks and ways were in perfect harmony with her surroundings; she might have been the youngest of St. Ursula's eleven thousand virgins.

The Fays were hardly settled in the house, now to be known as the Fay Homestead, when the celebration of the 200th anniversary of the founding of Harvard College, in 1836, brought the Reverend Samuel Gilman and his wife, Caroline, to stay with them for the great event. In the northeast bedroom of the house, looking out upon the Washington Elm, Samuel Gilman wrote in honor of the day the ode "Fair Harvard," sung ever since by Harvard men. Mrs. Gilman's facile pen had recorded all the stages of their

journey from South Carolina through New York State, which she calls the "West," to Canada and Boston. In *The Poetry of Travelling in the United States*, she thus describes the celebration:

This memorable day (Sept. 8th, 1836) is ushered in by clouds, but I cannot bring myself to believe that they will not disperse. Everything should be bright on this great anniversary, the two hundredth year since the foundation of Harvard College. The beautiful repose which characterizes Cambridge still rests over the verdant common and the tasteful buildings scattered around it, though thousands of individuals are gradually collecting to join the great Jubilee. The noble elm of Washington, the tree beneath which his tent was pitched in the revolutionary war, is waving quietly in the breeze not far from my window, the only object in the whole circle of my view which saw the infant day of Harvard. . . .

The great subject of excitement for the last week has been, whether ladies should be permitted to hear the addresses within the tent. So strong was the desire to effect this object among the gentlemen that it was given up only at the last moment, from the apprehension of too limited a space for the numbers that would probably have pressed in. The only substitute therefore for the ladies was to visit the tent, yesterday, after its completion, and call upon their imaginations to locate Webster, and Everett, and Legaré, and the other Mercuries of our country, in their respective seats.

The site for the tent is well chosen on a green enclosure, forming a natural amphitheatre.[1] The covering of the

1. Mr. A. S. Pier, in *The Story of Harvard*, places the Pavilion "in front of University Hall."

LIBRARY OF MOUNT SAINT MARY'S COLLEGE EMMITSBURG, MARYLAND

Pavilion is supported in the centre by a pillar between fifty and sixty feet in height, gradually descending in a slope in the Pagoda style, until it meets eight pillars supporting a frame work from which the canvass reaches to the ground, where it is fastened as a protection from air and observation. The pillars are covered with white cloth from the base upward, and garlanded with flowers and evergreens, while festoons hang gracefully from different quarters of the arch. The seats for the President of the day and the invited guests are placed on a platform in the lowest part of the amphitheatre, while semicircular ranges of tables for the alumni, in classes, occupy the whole rising ground, and are so arranged that every individual will face the President of the day. . . .

Next to the view of Niagara has this day thrilled my soul. The sun *did* break out in beauty and gladness over this noble scene like a sent blessing. Tears of emotion have been in the dim eyes of age, trickled down the cheek of manhood, and glistened on the face of youth, and every woman who witnessed that mighty wave of the intellectual ocean of our country, felt proud of her connexion with Harvard.

By nine o'clock there was a crowd of ladies at the church door, waiting for its opening. The key was turned within, and in we rushed. I should have been badly seated, after all, had not one of the seats reserved for the President's family in the gallery been kindly offered me. From that point I saw everything to the greatest advantage, and watched with eagerness the procession which entered in the following order:

Students of the University
Band of Music
Chief Marshal and Aids
Committee of Arrangements
President Quincy and Chaplain of the day
The Corporation of the University
Ex-President Kirkland, and President Humphrey
of Amherst College
His Excellency the Governor and Suite
The Vice-Presidents of the Day
Senators and Representatives in Congress
Judges of the United States and State Courts,
and Attorney General
Benefactors of the University, distinguished Strangers,
and other Guests specially invited
The Overseers of the University
Professors, Tutors, and Officers of the University
Gentlemen who have received honorary degrees, and
who do not come under any regular
Class of Graduates
Graduates of the University in the order of their
Classes, from the oldest class present, to 1836
Students of the Divinity School, Law School, and
Medical School, who are not included
above.

There were no ladies on the lower floor, but countless beaming eyes from the galleries testified their interest in the human mass that was collecting below, filling every point of the building, wave upon wave. The Rev. Dr. Ripley of Concord, ninety years of age, commenced the services by prayer. . . . "The age that was past" seemed speaking to one and all from this time-worn form with oracular energy. Then the following Ode, by the Rev. S. Gilman, was performed by a select choir:

Fair Harvard! thy sons to thy Jubilee throng,
And with blessings surrender thee o'er,
By these festival-rites, from the Age that is past,
To the Age that is waiting before.
O Relic and Type of our ancestors' worth,
That hast long kept their memory warm!
First flower of their wilderness! Star of their night,
Calm rising through change and through storm!

To thy bowers we were led in the bloom of our youth,
From the home of our free-roving years,
When our fathers had warn'd, and our mothers had pray'd,
And our sisters had blest, through their tears,
Thou then wert our Parent, — the nurse of our souls, —
We were moulded to manhood by thee,
Till freighted with treasure thoughts, friendships and hopes,
Thou didst launch us on Destiny's sea.

When, as pilgrims, we come to revisit thy halls,
To what kindlings the season gives birth!
Thy shades are more soothing, thy sunlight more dear,
Than descend on less privileged earth:
For the Good and the Great, in their beautiful prime,
Through thy precincts have musingly trod,
As they girded their spirits, or deepened the streams
That make glad the fair City of God.

Farewell! be thy destinies onward and bright!
To thy children the lesson still give,
With freedom to think, and with patience to bear,
And for Right ever bravely to live.
Let not moss-covered Error moor *thee* at its side,
As the world on Truth's current glides by;
Be the herald of light, and the bearer of Love,
Till the stock of the Puritans die.

There was a felt stillness as the sentiment and music sank in every heart, and at the close each man folded his printed copy carefully like a thing to be cherished and carried to his home.

President Quincy's discourse was an interesting revelation of the early history of the College. There was a happy mixture of graceful good humor mingled with the more serious matter of Mr. Quincy's essay and a general smile lit up the countenances of the audience to whom bequests of thousands of dollars were familiar, to hear him read records of donations to the College of an iron spoon and pewter cup, or similar articles.

Dr. Homer of Newton, an octogenarian of the class of 1777, made the concluding prayer. The services were then closed by a doxology in which every individual appeared to join. The voices, perfect in harmony, came to the ear like a tuned tempest, in their solemn fulness and power.

Most of the ladies rushed from the house to see the procession move to the Pavilion; a few, perhaps half a dozen, were detained accidentally in the gallery, and the formation of the procession in the Church, which they witnessed, constituted one of the most interesting and affecting scenes of the celebration. The marshal of the day called "the class of 1759." There was no response — the only survivor, a gentleman from Maine, being incapacitated from attendance. Successive classes were summoned; there was a hush over that immense concourse that would have made a foot-fall seem loud. At length "the class of 1774" was called; a feeble old man stepped forth, and passed along the aisle *alone*. A reaction was experienced, and a burst of animated cheers followed his tottering foot-steps. It was a grand moment. I know nothing finer in the poetry of life. . . .

It was a glorious procession when they were all formed and brought the pulse of the spectator higher than military

or civic grandeur could do. Thirteen hundred persons passed before the eye, who had all drank from the same intellectual fountain. It was a serious procession, for this would never meet again. I scarcely saw a smile.

There were several private circles which were entertained by the hospitality of the Cambridge ladies at dinner; and many of them, to beguile the time before the President's levee, walked to the Pavilion. . . .

But the time approached for the interdict of separation to be taken off, and we retired to dress for the President's levee. At twilight the first lights appeared, and by eight o'clock the illumination of the Colleges, the Law School, the Church, and other buildings in the vicinity began to attract the throng. Invited guests passed and repassed from the President's fashionably filled rooms to the College grounds, as suited their inclination. There was no restraint, and one could scarcely say which was more attractive, the music, the refreshments, the elegance of the saloon, or the brilliant lights abroad, shining on groups of happy, yet quiet throngs of all conditions and ages. . . .

It is now near midnight, — all is still. . . .

But my far-wandering thoughts are recalled by the rustling of the wide-spread arms of Washington's Elm, whose green leaves wave as lightly as when its buds were formed *before we were a nation;* and my busy musings ask for measured words.

The indefatigable writer then proceeds with an original poem!

Mrs. Gilman, on this return to Cambridge, finds contrasts of fashion and intellect, noting with approbation that the intellectual pleasure is combined with economy. She writes:

THE WASHINGTON ELM

1856

I prepared for an evening party. . . . There was the brilliantly illuminated room that cast no shadow, the soft and courteous salute, distinguished strangers, stately ladies, graceful girls, ornaments lavished by taste and wealth, fruits rich and tempting; all that the eye seeks when it asks for fashion and splendor; nothing that the heart wants when it yearns for answering sympathy; nothing that the mind cherishes when it seeks intellectual food. . . . There is, however, a very pleasant association of ladies and gentlemen called the Book Club which is an exception to the above charge. It is composed of twenty families and a meeting of the members takes place the first Thursday evening of each month, at their respective houses, in regular order. A subscription of $5 per annum is paid by every family, and this amount is laid out in the purchase of recent publications of any value. . . . At the annual meeting the members have a sale of the books on hand, by an auction among themselves. . . . This association has existed several years and it has been found to exercise a very happy influence on society. The evening in which they meet passes in agreeable conversation and as the refreshments are simple and give little trouble in the preparation there is less of formality and ceremony than in most parties. Strangers are invited, and it affords them an opportunity of seeing the refined and literary society of Cambridge. The members are chosen by ballot and the choice must be unanimous; by this arrangenent a great harmony prevails and it preserves the character of a select society. The circumstance that the same books are read and enjoyed by so many gives an interest to the members, affords topics of conversation of a cheerful nature, and a knowledge of the passing literature of the day at little expense of time or money.

For the young people a livelier society met often in Fay House. Thomas Wentworth Higginson wrote in reminiscence, in his *Cheerful Yesterdays:*

I went often to tolerably large parties in Cambridge and Boston. . . . I saw the really agreeable manners which then prevailed in the little city, and cannot easily be convinced that there are now in the field any youths at once so manly and so elegant. Such leaders were doubtless good social models. . . . But I had more continuous influences in the friendship of two fair girls, both of whom were frank, truthful, and attractive. One of them — Maria Fay, of convent fame, was a little older than my self. . . . I had with both the kind of cordial friendship, without a trace of love-making, yet tinged with refined sentiment, which is for every young man a most fortunate school. They counseled and reprimanded and laughed at me, when needful, in a way I should not have tolerated from boys at that time, nor yet from my own sisters, wise and judicious though these were.

A potent influence was also preparing for me in Cambridge in a peculiarly fascinating circle of young people, more gifted, I cannot help thinking, than any later coterie of the same kind, — which seemed to group itself around James Lowell and Maria White, his bethrothed, who were known among the members as their "King and Queen." They called themselves "The Brothers and Sisters," being made up in that way. My own point of contact with them was remote, but real; my mother had removed, when her family lessened, to a smaller house built by my elder brother, and belonging in these latter days to Radcliffe College.[1] This was next door to the Fay House of that in-

1. Vaughan House, once standing next door to Fay House.

stitution, then occupied by Judge Fay. And as my friend Maria Fay was a cousin of some of the Brothers and Sisters, they made the house an occasional rendezvous; and as there were attractive younger kindred whom I chanced to know, I was able at least to look through the door of this paradise of youth.

Edward Everett Hale in *James Russell Lowell and his Friends* describes "The Brothers and Sisters":

There was an inner circle of companionship, in which Lowell enjoyed the entire love of all the others. . . . In college life, especially in their senior year, five of the young men of this company had lived at Cambridge in the closest intimacy. These were Lowell, William Wetmore Story, John Gallison King, William Abijah White and my brother Nathan. There is no need of saying how this intimacy grew up. White and King were cousins. Story and Lowell were both Cambridge boys. . . . But there was a distinction, unique so far as I have seen, in the fact that . . . four of these young men had sisters of nearly their own age, all charming young women, whose tastes, interests, and studies were precisely the same as their brothers', and whose complete intimacy, and tender, personal, self-sacrificing love for each other was absolute. . . . They were of remarkable personal beauty. No girls ever lived with one heart and one soul in more complete union and harmony than these five. They were Anna Maria White, who married Lowell; Mary Story, who married George Ticknor Curtis; Augusta Gilman King and Caroline Howard King, and Sarah Everett Hale. In their personal talk, in their constant letters, they spoke of themselves as "The Band." But I need not say that where there was such an intimacy as theirs, or where there was such an intimacy as their brothers', the brothers and sisters were equally intimate.

The home of each was the home of all. These homes were in Boston, Watertown, Cambridge, and Salem. . . . Among all these ten there was the simplest and most absolute personal friendship.

While the girls called this association "The Band," the boys were more apt to call it "The Club." Not that it ever had any place of meeting, any rules, any duties, or any other conditions of any club that was ever heard of; but that, generally speaking, where one of them was, there was another. If one had money, all had it. If one had a book, all had it. If one went to Salem to a dance, the probability was that all five went. . . . And so of their sisters.

Whenever they met at Salem, they were sure to meet also Dr. John Francis Tuckerman and his sister, Jane Frances Tuckerman. I suppose any full catalogue of the Band, if one attempted such a thing, would include these two names. . . .

I am favored by the person best competent to write,[1] with a few reminiscences:

". . . It would be as impossible to produce on paper the charm of that brilliant circle as to catch a falling star and imprison it for future examination!

"But perhaps I can make a picture for you of one of the Band meetings at my father's house, at which James Lowell was present, which may give some faint idea of that gay group of friends.

"It is in April, 1842, and for weeks sounds of preparation have been echoing through the old house. Two beds are placed in each of the spacious bedrooms, the larder is supplied with dainties, a feeling of expectation pervades the air, and a sense of general festivity is diffused through the house, which has put on its holiday dress to greet the coming guests. As they were all friends of J. L.'s at that time,

1. Caroline Howard King.

perhaps a slight sketch of some of them may interest your readers.

"First, James himself, slight and small, with rosy cheeks and starry eyes and waving hair parted in the middle, very like Page's picture. He was very reserved in manner, much absorbed in his lady-love, and although his wit was always brilliant, it had not then ripened into the delightful humor of after days. He and his friend William Page, the artist, were at this time possessed with a divine fury for Shakespeare's sonnets. The little book was forever in his hands and happy were they when they could catch a stray brother or sister to listen to 'just this one beauty,' which usually was followed by twenty more; and happy, too, was the brother or sister, for, although James did not then read well, his voice being thin and without resonance, his youthful, loving enthusiasm cast a spell over his crooning, the spell of which nobody could resist.

"N. H., tall and graceful, perhaps the most highly gifted of that bright circle, dropping the diamonds of his polished wit in a languid, nonchalant manner, but capable of a rare awakening when the right moment came.

"W. W. S., versatile and vivacious, a capital mimic, an adept at bright nonsense and gay repartee.

"W. A. W. A good head and kind heart, always ready to cap a good story with a better. . . .

"J. G. K., the leader in the revels, lighting up every meeting with his peculiar racy vein of humor, and J. F. T., the beauty of the Band and the sweetest singer of his time.

"And now, with the charming group of sisters, they have all arrived at 'The King's Arms' (as they liked to call the cheerful old house) for a week's visit, and I will try to bring back one evening of that happy time.

". . . it was arranged that when, on this evening, James, as usual, asked for music, one of the number . . . should

sing one of his own songs, 'From the closed window gleams no spark,' adapted to a lovely old air. The song was a great favorite with both James and Maria, for whom it was written, and as the well-known words rang through the room, it was delightful to watch James' face. Surprise, pleasure, tremulous feeling, and finally a look of delight, as he turned to Maria, flashed over it. . . .

"In those days we always had a fourth meal at about ten o'clock, and after an evening of music and dancing, and a good time generally, we adjourned to the dining-room, where, seated at the large round table, the great festivity began, and an unfailing flow of wit, sentiment, fun, and scintillation was kept up into the small hours of the night . . . Then came songs and glees, in the choruses of which we all heartily joined. Or M. W. would repeat 'Binnorie, oh Binnorie,' or W. S. sing, 'A Life on the Ocean Wave,' or some of the party sing and act for us the oratorio of the 'Skeptic,' with one awful chorus, 'Tremble Whipstick,' in which we were all expected to show violent signs of trembling fear. It was all nonsense, but delightful nonsense, the bubbling over of these gay young spirits.

"But this is only a sketch of the lighter hours of the Band. We had our serious times, when everything in heaven or on earth was discussed with the airy audacity that belongs to youth, when all the questions of the day — art, politics, poetry, ethics, religion, philosophy — were bowled down by our light balls, with easy certainty that we were quite able to settle the affairs of the world. There was great variety of character and opinion among us, so that our discussions did not lack spice and vigor; but for the short time he was with us, when wit met wit in the bright melee, there was no keener lance in rest among the 'Knights of the Round Table' than James Lowell's."

MARIA FAY

It is pleasant to think that these meetings also took place in Fay House. Another gathering of young people in which Maria Fay took part was peculiarly of the period. She told her niece, in later days, how she was inoculated for smallpox. "Gay parties of young folk — boys and girls — went out to the pest-house and had a social time until one by one they sickened." She had the disease slightly, with but one or two pock-marks.

Until 1847 the family circle of the Fays, widened by marriage, was still unbroken. In that year Mrs. Fay died. In the same year died the oldest son, Samuel Prescott Fay, who had made his home in Savannah, Georgia. Richard Sullivan Fay had married in 1832 and lived much of his time on a beautiful estate near Lynn, keenly interested in agriculture. He later lived in England at Moor Park near Ludlow, in Shropshire. Charles who married in 1833 had become a clergyman at St. Albans, Vermont. Joseph Story, married in 1840, lived in Boston, with a summer home at Woods Hole. Harriet had married in 1830 Mr. W. H. Greenough, and lived at Falmouth. Eliza, the youngest, had married Judge Allen of Vermont. Only Maria remained at home, her father's congenial companion, sharing his devotion to Christ Church and to hospitality alike.

Judge Fay was a close friend of that Dr. Webster whose sudden anger dealt Dr. Parkman a mortal blow and whose terrified disposal of the body made a "cause-célèbre." Dr. Webster, another Harvard professor, Judge Fay, and Maria used to play whist frequently together. Family tradition has it that on this fateful evening Judge Fay and Maria waited a long while for Dr. Webster, outside Fay House. When he appeared Maria exclaimed, "with his long cloak on, and his hat pulled over his eyes, Dr. Webster looks like an assassin." After the game was over, Dr. Webster privately told Judge Fay the terrible deed and its provocation, and asked the Judge to defend him. Judge Fay told him that if he had come to him at once, upon killing Dr. Parkman, a decision of manslaughter could have been reached, but that the burning of the body made the case hopeless. The last letter Dr. Webster wrote before his execution, a beautiful letter, calm and resigned, was to Judge Fay. Nothing could change their friendship.

In 1851, Maria Fay, with a much loved niece, Anna Maria, daughter of her brother, Joseph Story Fay, visited her brother Richard in England. The story of their experience has been delightfully told by Anna Maria, in *Victorian Days in England.*

In 1856 the old Judge died, ending a good life in peace in his own home. Maria could not keep to her-

self alone that ample, hospitable home. Among her nephews and nieces one was especially congenial, the beautiful Lillie Greenough. Through 1856 and 1857 she lived with her Aunt Maria, at Fay House, going to the school which Mrs. Louis Agassiz had opened in her own home. Her glorious voice was a bond between her and Maria, whose voice, while not so superb, was a delight to her friends. Lillie wrote to her mother from Fay House, in June, 1857:

Aunty is "pestered" (as she calls it) to death by people wanting me to sing for their charities. Everyone has a pet charity, which it seems must be attended to just at this time, and they clamor for help from me, and aunty has not the courage to say "no." Therefore, about once a week I am dressed in the white muslin and the black shoes, which is my gala get-up, and a carriage is sent for me. Then aunty and I are driven to the Concert Hall where, when my time comes, I go on the platform and sing "Costa Diva," "Oh non credea," etc., and if I am encored then I sing "Coming Through the Rye."

What I do *not* enjoy is being obliged to sing in church every Sunday. Dr. Hoppin has persuaded aunty to let me help in the choir; that is, to sing the Anthem and the "Te Deum," but it amounts to my doing about all the singing! Don't you think this is cruel?

We laughed very much at aunty's efforts in the Anti-slavery movement (just now at its height), when all Massachusetts has risen up with a bound in order to prove that the blacks are as good as the whites (if not better), and should have all their privileges. She, wishing to demonstrate this point, introduced Joshua Green, a little colored

boy (the washerwoman's son), into the Sunday-School class. The general indignation among the white boys did not dismay her, as she hoped that Joshua would come up to the mark. The answer to the first question in the catechism (what is your name?), he knew, and answered boldly, "Joshua Green." But the second question, "who made you?" was the stumbling block. He sometimes answered "Father," and sometimes, "Mother." Aunty, being afraid that he would answer "Miss Fay," had him come to the house during the week, where she could din into him that it was God who made him and all creation. "Now, Joshua, when Dr. Hoppin says to you, 'Who made you?' you must answer, 'God, who made everything on earth and in heaven' — you understand?" "Yes, ma'am," and repeated the phrase until aunty thought him ripe to appear at Sunday-school, which he did on the following Sunday. You may imagine aunty's consternation when Dr. Hoppin asked Joshua, "Who made you?" and Joshua looked at aunty with a broad grin, showing all his teeth, and said, "Lor', Miss Fay, I forget who you said it was." This was aunty's last effort to teach the blacks. . . .

In 1859 Lillie sailed for Europe to train her voice under foreign teachers. Lillie wrote to her aunt from New York:

I will write as soon as we arrive on the other side. On whatever side I am, I am always your loving niece, who thinks that there is no one in the wide world to compare to you, that no one is as clever as you, that no one can sing like you, and that there never was anyone who can hold a candle to you. There!

Her experience in London was disconcerting. Her teacher, Garcia, had said "Mademoiselle, you have a very wonderful voice but you have not the remotest idea how to sing. Take six months' rest and don't sing a single note, then come back to me." In May 1860, she wrote to her aunt:

I can't imagine that I am the same person who has (it seems to me years ago) sung before large, distinguished and enthusiastic audiences, has been a little belle, in a way, in Cambridge, has had serenades from the Harvard Glee Club (poor aunty! routed out of your sleep in the middle of the night to listen to them), inspired poetry, and danced on "The Green" on Class Day.

She wrote a year later:

Mother will have written to you of my engagement to Charles Moulton. I wish you would come and see me married, and that I could present all my future family to the most lovable of aunts. My fiancé is very musical, composes charming things and plays delightfully on the piano. Greet all the united family from me, and tell them not to worry over my future, as you wrote they were doing. I have renounced forever the pomps and allurements of the stage, and I trust the leaves on the genealogical tree will cease their trembling, and that the Fays, my ancestors, will not trouble themselves to turn in their graves, as you threatened they would if I did anything to disgrace them.[1]

But Lillie Greenough was an artist and rose to the challenge of the higher standard shown her. When

1. Mme. Lillie (Greenough) de Hegermann-Lindencrone, *In the Courts of Memory*. New York, 1912.

she and her husband and two children, with straitened means after the siege of Paris, returned to the shelter of the Fay Homestead, she sang in concerts over the country. Her husband was an invalid and died at Fay House. Later, she met, in Washington, Mr. de Hegermann-Lindencrome, Danish Minister to the United States, and was married to him in Christ Church with her wedding reception in the oval parlor of Fay House. Her beautiful voice and charming personality made her very popular in Europe, when her husband was Minister at Stockholm.

The Fay Homestead seemed sadly empty to Maria Fay with Lillie gone. In 1859 she rented the house to her father's old friend, Richard Sullivan, who lived there with his son, Richard Sullivan, Jr., until his death in 1861. His life ran parallel to that of Judge Fay. He, too, served on the Governor's Council in 1820, and in the same year was a member of the Convention to revise the State Constitution, which his father, when Governor of Massachusetts in 1807 and 1808, had had considerable share in forming. He was an Overseer of Harvard for the long period from 1821 to 1852. He was keenly interested in the schools of Boston and in his Brookline gardens, famous for rare hot-house plants and choice fruits. He was a notable raconteur and conversationalist. In young Samuel

Gilman's letters to his fiancée there are glimpses of the life in Mr. Sullivan's Boston home:

Saturday, Nov. 23, 1811. This evening I had devoted to pass with the charming Mr. and Mrs. Sullivan, but one of the boarders at Mrs. Brown's presented me with a ticket for the theatre. . . . Notwithstanding I was pleased beyond expectation with the performances, yet a sigh of regret could not help escaping me that I might have enjoyed a purer, more rational, and sweetly domestick evening of happiness had I executed my first determination and visited that fascinating family.

Tuesday, Dec. 31. Not being much acquainted with fashionable hours, I arrived at Mr. Sullivan's some time before the dinner-party collected. Being himself engaged, he left me alone with liberty to take such books from the piano as I could amuse myself with. . . . The company assembled at Mr. Sullivan's was very intelligent and agreeable.

The son, Richard Sullivan, had married Henrietta Gardiner, of Gardiner, Maine, whose skill in music and in painting, and whose grace and charm continued for the old gentleman the character of his earlier home. She had blue eyes, golden curls, "a Maine complexion," and a "spiritual expression." A fellow-student in William Hunt's painting class was Mrs. Henry Whitman, whose close connection with Fay House as part of Radcliffe College had its beginning in these earlier days. Mrs. Whitman attributed to Mrs. Sullivan the inspiration which led her to become an artist.

Thomas Russell Sullivan, the Boston novelist and dramatist, who was Richard Sullivan's young cousin, lived with him for several years, bringing youth into a childless home.

In 1866, Professor Wolcott Gibbs rented the house, remaining there until 1871. He was a scientist of the new school, and a new world follows upon the leisurely and stately grace of the old.

V

Scientist and Saint

(1866–1885)

PROFESSOR WOLCOTT GIBBS, who lived in Fay House from 1866 through 1870, was one of earth's fortunate sons. Distinguished heritage, education, opportunities, health, fine looks, and a creative intelligence were his, and these gifts of fortune he carried so modestly, and utilized with such candor and hard work, that no one begrudged them to him.

Through his mother, Laura Wolcott, he was descended from Roger Wolcott, second in command at the siege of Louisburg in 1745 and Governor of the Colony of Connecticut; from Oliver Wolcott, Brigadier-General of the Connecticut Militia, member of the Continental Congress and signer of the Declaration of Independence, Lieutenant-Governor and Governor of Connecticut; and from Oliver Wolcott, Secretary of the Treasury from 1795 to 1800, Justice of the United States Circuit Court, and Governor of Connecticut. His mother was a brilliant, vigorous personality with artistic talent, to whose home were drawn the best minds in the New York of her time. Her influence over his childhood was shared by that

of her brother-in-law, Dr. William Ellery Channing, the Unitarian liberal and saint, with whom he spent several vacations in his youth. His father had scientific interests and was one of the earliest American mineralogists. The boy's interest in nature was early aroused. He tells of himself as a boy that he was "often occupied in making volcanoes with such materials as he could obtain and in searching the walls of the estate for minerals." All the circumstances of his youth combined to foster the strength of his body and mind.

After graduating at Columbia in 1841, he studied medicine at the College of Physicians and Surgeons in New York, taking his degree in 1845. He then had the privilege of foreign study in the laboratories of Hammelsberg, Rose, and Liebig in Germany and under Laurent, Dumas, and Reynault in Paris. Edward W. Morley, writing of Gibbs, in *American Philosophical Society Proceedings*, vol. XLIX (1910), states that "Among all these great teachers it was Rose who seems most to have put his impress on Gibbs, and it may well be that from Rose came the preponderant inclination towards analytical and inorganic chemistry. But the young student . . . had already qualities from which were easily developed the breadth of view and of interest in various kinds of research which always marked Gibbs." He had done

original experimental work in his junior year at Columbia and all his life followed the experimental path. After teaching at the College of Physicians and Surgeons, and at the Free Academy (now College of the City of New York), he was called to Harvard, as Rumford Professor of Chemistry, in 1863.

One of the most distinguished of his pupils, Frank Wigglesworth Clarke, chief chemist of the United States Geological Survey, is thus quoted by Morley:

> Most of the students had already gained some elementary knowledge of chemistry; their work began with the usual practice in analytical methods and chemical manipulations, and as the men showed capacity they were admitted to the confidence of their master and aided him in his investigations. This procedure may seem commonplace enough today, but in the years of which I speak it was new to American institutions and was looked upon doubtfully by some. . . . The real examinations under Gibbs were daily interviews, when he visited each student at his laboratory table and questioned him about his work. This, together with the reported analyses, gave the teacher a clear conception of the true standing of each man. The fewness of the pupils was a distinct advantage, for all worked together in one room, beginners and research workers often side by side. The result was that they learned much from one another and there were many discussions among them over the chemical problems of the day. The men were taught to think for themselves, laying thereby a foundation for professional success which was pretty substantial. The course of instruction had no definite term of years prescribed for it, and graduation came whenever the

individual had done the required amount of work and submitted an acceptable original thesis. The final examination was usually oral, each man alone with his teacher, and was conducted in an easy conversational way which tended to establish the confidence of the candidate from the very beginning. In my own case, I remember that the questions covered a fairly broad range of chemical topics, and at the end of it, Dr. Gibbs drew me into a sort of discussion or argument with him over the then modern doctrine of valence. I now see that his purpose was not merely to ascertain what I had read on the subject, but what I really thought about it, if indeed I was entitled to think at all. Gibbs invariably treated his students, not as so many vessels into which knowledge was to be poured, but as reasonable beings, with definite purposes, to whom his help must be given. The research work in which the advanced students shared, and for which they received public credit, served to teach them that chemistry was a living and growing subject, and to train them in the art of solving unsolved problems.

What was there at all unusual in his teaching? Nothing, perhaps, from a modern point of view, but much that was new in America in the middle sixties. It was Gibbs's merit that he, more than any other one man, introduced into the United States the German conception of research as a means of chemical instruction, a conception which is now taken as a matter of course without thought of its origin. Gibbs worked with small resources, and with no help from the outside; he was a reformer who never preached reform; his students rarely suspected that they were doing anything out of the ordinary; but they had the utmost confidence in their master, and took it for granted that his methods were sound. . . . The success of his students is perhaps the best monument to his memory.

In 1871 a reorganization of the Chemical Department transferred Dr. Gibbs to the Department of Physics where he taught a small advanced class in Light and Heat. His private means enabled Gibbs to equip a small chemical laboratory of his own and engage an assistant. "In that laboratory," wrote Clarke,

> he carried out those brilliant researches on the complex inorganic acids which marked the culmination of his career. The equipment was most modest. . . . Indeed, Gibbs's favorite piece of apparatus was that homely utensil, a cast-iron cooking stove, which served for several useful purposes. Precipitates could be dried in the oven, crucibles were buried in the coals, water was kept hot on top of it. As an instrument of research it was neither elegant nor orthodox, but it did the work, and what more could be desired? Gibbs adapted himself to circumstances, and cared little for the instrumental refinements which so many chemists seem to regard as necessary. . . .[1]

Mr. Charles E. Munroe, in *Science* (1911), has given us perhaps the best picture of Dr. Gibbs.

> He was above the average man in height and his body was symmetrically developed with his stature so that he walked and moved with natural gracefulness. His head was admirably proportioned and was covered with a splendid mass of curling black hair which matched the beard that covered his face. In clothing and person he was always decently fastidious but ever the attracting features were

1. F. W. Clarke, Wolcott Gibbs Memorial Lecture, in *Transactions of London Chemical Society*, vol. XCV (1909).

his eyes which were deep brown in color, lustrous and luminous and his voice which was full and rich, with a deliciously attractive and convincing overtone.

Such was the man who went out from Fay House to stimulate his students and advance his science, returning to his wife's music and the company of the best minds in Cambridge and Boston. The grandfather of Mrs. Gibbs, Joseph Carlo Mauran, an Italian of Villafranca, was impressed on board a British man-of-war when a boy of twelve years. After a virtual captivity of two years, he escaped when the ship lay at anchor in the harbor of New London, Connecticut. He remained in America and married an American wife. His son, Oroondates Mauran, became a highly respected merchant in New York and proprietor of the first Italian Opera House. He was passionately fond of music, kept open house for foreign musicians, and gave his sons and daughters especial training in languages, art, and music. It was his daughter Josephine who married Wolcott Gibbs and brought to Fay House a blended inheritance of Yankee energy and Italian artistry. Mrs. Gibbs was an expert pianist, and there was much entertaining and delightful society in the oval parlor. It was a fit home for so gentle, wise and modern a spirit as Wolcott Gibbs. Farmers and successful artisans, scholars, men of public affairs, and distinguished gentlemen

had lived here — all of them, in manner and mind, of the past. But Wolcott Gibbs is of our day and would be at home among the new approximations of Science, having been instrumental in creating the modern mind.

When he had left Fay House, Maria Fay came back to her home, and for fifteen years gathered about her friends and family, for music and hospitality in health, for devoted care in illness. Her widowed sister, Harriet Greenough, with her son, came home for care in increasing invalidism. Her much loved niece, Lillie Greenough, with whom she had been in Paris during the years of the Gibbses' tenancy, brought the invalid husband, Charles Moulton, and three children, to be loved and cared for. To accommodate this family that her hospitality created, she added to the house a third story. The long central window of the parlor's oval bay had outside steps leading down to the shady garden with its great bed of lilies of the valley. Here in the room where Sophia Dana had married George Ripley, Harriet Howard Ely Ellis, granddaughter of Harriet Howard Fay Greenough, was given her wedding reception. The marriage ceremony was at Christ Church, close by, where her mother and grandmother had also been married and where the old bell ringer, who had pealed the bells the first time for Lafayette, pealed them the last time

for her. Here she left her children for Aunt Maria to cherish, when she must go to Europe. Down through four generations, the Fay family were welcomed at the Homestead.

One of Maria Fay's nieces writes of her, in loving reminiscence:

She was not handsome — her hair was reddish brown with natural curls, her eyes rather a pale blue, her skin a dead white from an attack of measles when she was a young woman. But her face was very lovely, for it radiated kindness, goodness and intelligence. She was of medium height only, of good figure, and in shabbiest clothes could never be mistaken for anyone but a lady. She had the most charming manner and was an ideal hostess, original and inventive of all sorts of amusements in which she was as interested as any of the young people, and like grandmother noted for her hospitality, always sheltering some forlornity, be it man, beast, or bird, under her wing. . . .

As I remember Fay House in my Aunt Maria's day, it was the center of fun and frolic of a very clever kind. Her friend James Russell Lowell, who married her cousin, was always an intimate from boyhood, and full of fun and mischief in the early days, always preferring to enter by the window rather than the door. She was very musical and a very delightful accompanist, and when her niece lived there, first as Lillie Greenough, later as Mrs. Charles Moulton and then married to Mr. de Hegerman, there was much music. Ole Bull was a geat admirer of Lillie's lovely voice and came there whenever he could, as well as other musicians.

It was a brilliant crowd, often outvying each other in nonsense, and in charades in which Mr. Lowell, Mr. Long-

fellow, the Pierces and Jameses took part, with the Moulton children and young cousins.

There was never a more delightful hostess than Aunt Maria at any time, simple and dignified and quite without New England self-consciousness. Her French was perfect, and when she went abroad to stay with her niece, Mrs. Moulton (and later in Denmark), she was entirely at home anywhere and picked up languages very easily. It was because she was such a lovely and cultivated woman that I gave the first scholarship to Fay House, that her name might be perpetuated. It was for the same reason that Mrs. Agassiz had the name Fay kept on the house. It seemed as if her spirit might in some way influence the following generation in quietness and gentleness. She had a droll and ready wit and was a wonderful raconteuse. She could spin endless stories most amusingly and give the gist of a book in wonderfully few words.

That she held the friends of her youth in later years shows in a charming picture given by this same niece:

I went out there one Class Day afternoon and she met me at the door in her lilac-figured muslin. She exclaimed, "Oh my dear! If you had only come an hour ago! I let my women go over to the Yard and was shelling the peas on the porch, when Mr. Longfellow came to call and asked if he might stay. I said yes, if he would shell peas. Then James Lowell appeared and Mr. Longfellow told him he too must shell peas. Finally Mr. William James came and those men were never in more brilliant mood than over that bowl of peas. If you only could have heard them!"

Maria Fay's hospitality gathered in not only her family and the wits and scholars of the community,

but the lonely and insignificant, as well. Her love embraced all who had need of her. She even sheltered in her cellar and buried in her backyard the hens of Professor Sophocles. Among her close friends was that "hardly domesticated wise man of the East," Evangelinus Apostolides, affectionately called "his little Sophocles" by his Greek schoolmaster and known by that name through the many years of his teaching at Harvard. Born near Mt. Pelion, he lived his formative years in the Convent on Mt. Sinai, coming to America under the patronage of the Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, under "the temptation of the ambition of learning." After study at Monson and at Amherst, he taught in the schools of Amherst, Hartford, and New Haven. Tutor in Greek at Harvard from 1842 to 1845 and from 1847 to 1859, he was made Adjunct Professor of Greek in 1859 and Professor of Ancient Byzantine and Modern Greek in 1860. After his death in 1883, Professor William Watson Goodwin, his associate in the Greek Department, wrote in the *Nation*, January 3, 1864:

> Harvard College has just lost one of her most remarkable men. Probably no one connected with her academic society has left so vivid a personal impression on the graduates of the past forty years, as the venerable Greek who has just passed away. Such a character as Professor Sophocles seldom finds his way into the academic circles of our Western world. He was as rare a phenonemon among us as a

monk of the middle ages, or even an ancient Greek, would have been. His peculiar dress; his slow, deliberate walk; his solemn, oracular utterance; the peculiar mixture of childish simplicity and biting sarcasm in his casual remarks; and his half-genuine, half-affected cynicism, were all familiar to the many classes who passed under his instruction while he was tutor in Greek to the Freshmen. Even in later years, when only a few special students enjoyed his teaching, every member of the College knew him well, and often looked with curiosity and wonder upon him as he walked to and from his room in the west entry of Holworthy. This room had been his abode since 1847, and it had generally served him for a kitchen as well as sleeping-room and study. Here he prepared his frugal meals, except when he gave his friends the rare privilege of his company; and when his dinner was ready he pushed aside the tomes of the Christian Fathers from his little table to make room for his plate. Nothing could induce him to change his hermit's cell for a more social mode of existence, and he would have been positively unhappy if he had been compelled to conform to the common rules of domestic life. He did not choose this solitary and inexpensive life from motives of economy, for he died a comparatively rich man; nor from any spirit of meanness, for he was one of the most benevolent men in the community, giving away quietly and unostentatiously every year more than would have sufficed to maintain him in elegance and luxury. He probably retained to the last some of the monkish spirit which he brought in his youth from the monastery of Mt. Sinai, in which he spent several years before he came to this country, and much of his peculiarity of manner must have come from the same source.

Professor Sophocles was a scholar of extraordinary attainments. His knowledge of the whole length and breadth of the Greek literature from Homer to the present day,

could hardly be surpassed. . . . He was as eccentric in his teaching as in everything else that he did. He had much of the Socratic way of asking questions to show a pupil his ignorance, and then leaving him to help himself as best he could. He often asked a question, especially if a visitor was in his class-room, merely to open the way for a joke or a sarcasm. He once passed a question about a peculiar Greek accent entirely round a class, eliciting various crude guesses, and then dryly remarked: "It is a misprint." Many will remember his question as to what was done with the Persians who were killed at Thermopylae. This called out various answers, to which he replied by a shake of his head; but when one hopeless Freshman replied that he did not know, he answered: "That is right; nobody knows." These anecdotes, with a thousand others, both historical and mythical, are very characteristic of his style of teaching. . . .

Another description was given by John Fiske as quoted by J. S. Clark in Fiske's *Life and Letters*:

The most distinct personality in the [classical] department — if not in the whole college — was Professor Sophocles, who, by reason of his Greek features, his flowing locks, his simple, quaint garb, presented a noticeable appearance. His manners, too, were unique — a combination of the courteous gentleman, the scholarly recluse, and the cynic, which caused him as an instructor to appear in various aspects. Many are the incidents related of his severely brusque and unjust treatment of students, partially atoned for by acts of courtesy, which show that a tenderness of heart was as genuine a part of his nature as was his love for his noble language. And he did love the Greek tongue! He seemed to know every Greek word, and its proper use, that has come down to us from the classic period, and his in-

sights into the great masterpieces of Greek literature were the valuable parts of his teaching. He had no patience with indifferent students, but to those who took an interest in the Greek language and literature he was a great help, an inspiration. Often he was unjust in his judgments. . . . A backward student called to explain his remissness and to assure the Professor that he did love his Greek study. "Then name two of your favorite passages," said the Professor. The student named one in the *Iliad* and one in the *Oedipus*. Professor Sophocles then handed him the books, saying, "Find those passages and read them to me." The student, in his reading, revealed serious errors. Said the Professor in his brusque way: "Young man, you do not understand Greek! You have no love for that noble language! You murder it! Enough. I want no more to do with you."

There was much complaint in the Class of '63 that the Professor's marks were incorrect, and particularly in the cases of three students who were entitled to widely different marks. On complaint being made, Professor Sophocles replied: "I can't distinguish between you gentlemen. You must take your chances as to what you get."

Professor George Herbert Palmer gives a vivid picture of Professor Sophocles, in the *Harvard Graduates' Magazine*, of June, 1891.

Outwardly he was always brusque and repellent. A certain savagery marked his very face. He once observed that, in introducing a character, Homer is apt to draw attention to the eye. Certainly in himself this was the feature which first attracted notice; for his eye had uncommon alertness and intelligence. Those who knew him well detected in it a hidden sweetness; but against the stranger it burned and

glared, and guarded all avenues of approach. Startled it was like the eye of a wild animal, and penetrating, "peering through the portals of the brain like the brass cannon." Over it crouched bushy brows, and all around the great head bristled white hair, on forehead, cheeks, and lips, so that little flesh remained visible, and the life was settled in two fiery spots. This concentration of expression in the few elementary features of shape, hair, and eyes made the head a magnificent subject for painting. Rembrandt should have painted it. William Hunt would have done it best justice among our own painters. It is a pity that no report of it hangs in Memorial Hall. But he would never allow a portrait of himself to be drawn. Into his personality strangers must not intrude. Venturing once to try for memoranda of his face, I took an artist to his room. The courtesy of Sophocles was too stately to allow him to turn my friend away, but he seated himself in a shaded window, and kept his head in constant motion. When my frustrated friend had departed, Sophocles told me, though without direct reproach, of two sketches which had before been surreptiously made, — one by the pencil of a student in his class, another in oils by a lady who had followed him on the street. Toward photography his aversion was weaker; perhaps because in that art a human being less openly meddled with him. Several admirable photographs of him exist.

From this sense of personal dignity, which made him at all times determined to keep out of the grasp of others, much of his brusqueness sprang. On the morning after he returned from his visit to Greece a fellow-professor saw him on the opposite side of the street, and, hastening across, greeted him warmly: "So you have been home, Mr. Sophocles; and how did you find your mother?" "She was up an apple-tree," said Sophocles, confining himself to the facts of the case. A boy who snowballed him on the street

PROFESSOR SOPHOCLES

he prosecuted relentlessly, and he could not be appeased until a considerable fine was imposed; but he paid the fine himself. Many a bold push was made to ascertain his age; yet, however suddenly the question came, or however craftily one crept from date to date, there was a uniform lack of success. "I see Allibone's Dictionary says you were born in 1805," a gentleman remarked. "Some statements have been nearer, and some have been farther from the truth." One day, when a violent attack of illness fell on him, a physician was called for diagnosis. He felt the pulse, he examined the tongue, he heard the report of the symptoms, then suddenly asked, "How old are you, Mr. Sophocles?" With as ready presence of mind and as pretty ingenuity as if he were not lying at the point of death, Sophocles answered: "The Arabs, Dr. W., estimate age by several standards. The age of Hassan, the porter, is reckoned by his wrinkles; that of Abdallah, the physician, by the lives he has saved; that of Achmet, the sage, by his wisdom, I, all my life a scholar, am nearing my hundredth year." To those who had once come close to Sophocles these little reserves, never asserted with impatience, were characteristic and endearing. I happen to know his age; hot irons shall not draw it from me.

Closely connected with his repellent reserve was the stern independence of his mode of life. In his scheme, little things were kept small and great things large. What was the true reading in a passage of Aristophanes, what the usage of a certain word in Byzantine Greek, — these were matters on which a man might well reflect and labor. But of what consequence was it if the breakfast was slight or the coat worn? Accordingly a single room, in which a light was seldom seen, sufficed him during his forty years of life in the college yard. It was totally bare of comforts. It contained no carpet, no stuffed furniture, no bookcase. The

college library furnished the volumes he was at any time using, and these lay along the floor, beside his dictionary, his shoes, and the box that contained the sick chicken. A single bare table held the book he had just laid down, together with a Greek newspaper, a silver watch, a cravat, a paper package or two, and some scraps of bread. His simple meals were prepared by himself over a small open stove, which served at once for heat and cookery. Eating, however, was always treated as a subordinate and incidental business, deserving no fixed time, no dishes, nor the setting of a table. The peasants of the East, the monks of Southern monasteries, live chiefly on bread and fruit, relished with a little wine; and Sophocles, in spite of Cambridge and America, was to the last a peasant and a monk. Such simple nutriments best fitted his consitution, for "they found their acquaintance there." The Western world had come to him by accident, and was ignored; the East was in his blood, and ordered all his goings. Yet, as a grave man of the East might, he had his festivities, and could on occasion be gay. Among a few friends he could tell a capital story and enjoy a well-cooked dish. But his ordinary fare was meagre in the extreme. For one of his heartier meals he would cut a piece of meat into bits and roast it on a spit, as Homer's people roasted theirs. "Why not use a gridiron?" I once asked, "It is not the same," he said, "The juice then runs into the fire. But when I turn my spit it bastes itself." His taste was more than usually sensitive, kept fine and discriminating by the restraint in which he held it. Indeed, all his senses, except sight, were acute. The wine he drank was the delicate unresinated Greek wine, — Corinthian, or Chian, or Cyprian; the amount of water to be mixed with each being carefully debated and employed. Each winter a cask was sent him from a special vineyard on the heights of Corinth, and occasioned something like a

general rejoicing in Cambridge, so widely were its flavorous contents distributed.[1] Whenever this cask arrived, or when there came a box from Mt. Sinai filled with potato-like sweetmeats, — a paste of figs, dates, and nuts, stuffed into sewed goatskins, — or when his hens had been laying a goodly number of eggs, then under the blue cloak a selection of bottles, or of sweetmeats, or of eggs would be borne to a friend's house, where for an hour the old man sat in dignity and calm, opening and closing his eyes and his jackknife; uttering meanwhile detached remarks, wise, gruff, biting, yet seldom lacking a kernel of kindness, till bedtime came, nine o'clock, and he was gone, the gifts — if thanks were feared — left in a chair by the door. There were half a dozen houses and dinner tables in Cambridge to which he went with pleasure, houses where he seemed to find a solace in the neighborhood of his kind. But human beings were an exceptional luxury. He had never learned to expect them. They never became necessities of his daily life, and I doubt if he missed them when they were absent. As he slowly recovered strength, after one of his later illnesses, I urged him to spend a month with me. Refusing in a brief sentence, he added with unusual gentleness: "To be alone is not the same for me and for you. I have never known anything else."

. . . Toward dumb and immature creatures his tenderness was more frank, for these could not thank him. Children always recognized in him their friend. A group of curly-heads usually appeared in his window on Class Day. A stray cat knew him at once, and, though he seldom stroked her, would quickly accommodate herself near his

1. "Sophocles at dinner, bringing with him two bottles of Greek wine . . . a strange eccentric man is Sophocles with his blue cloak and wild gray beard, his learning and his silence. He makes Diogenes a possibility." — H. W. Longfellow, *Journals*.

legs. By him spiders were watched, and their thin wants supplied. But his solitary heart went out most unreservedly and with the most pathetic devotion toward fragile chickens; and out of these uninteresting little birds he elicited a degree of responsive intelligence which was startling to see. One of his dearest friends,[1] coming home from a journey, brought him a couple of bantam eggs. When hatched and grown, they developed into a little five-inch burnished cock, which shone like a jewel or a bird of paradise, and a more sober but exquisite hen. These two, Frank and Nina,[2] and all their numerous progeny for many years, Sophocles trained to the hand. Each knew its name, and would run from the flock when its white-haired keeper called, and, sitting upon his hand or shoulder, would show queer signs of affection, not hesitating even to crow. The same generous friend who gave the eggs gave shelter also to the winged consequences. And thus it happened that three times a day, as long as he was able to leave his room, Sophocles went to that house where the Harvard Annex is now sheltered to attend his pets.[3] White grapes were carried there, and the choicest of corn and clamshell; and endless study was given to devising conveniences for housing, nesting, and the promenade. But he did not demand too much from his chickens. In their cases, as in dealing with human beings, he felt it wise to bear in mind the limit and to respect the foreordained. When Nina was laying badly, one springtime, I suggested a special food as a good egg-producer. But Sophocles declined to use it. "You may hasten matters," he said, "but you cannot change them. A hen is born with just so many eggs to lay. You cannot increase

1. Maria Fay.

2. The names of children of Lillie Moulton living with her at Fay House.

3. Fay House.

the number." The eggs, as soon as laid, were penciled with the date and the name of the mother, and were then distributed among his friends, or sparingly eaten at his own meals. To eat a chicken itself was a kind of cannibalism from which his whole nature shrank. "I do not eat what I love," he said, rejecting the bowl of chicken broth I pressed upon him in his last sickness.

A Cambridge home where Sophocles went freely, sure of understanding, was that of Professor Bond, Director of the Astronomical Observatory, whose father, the first Director, had been a close friend of Judge Fay. When ill, Sophocles turned to his friends from the isolation of his bare college room, and the Bonds had taken him in and cared for him through illness. In the same way he came, later, to Fay House and, placing his hand on his forehead, said, abruptly, "Maria, I feel dull, here. Take me home." "Come tomorrow morning," she answered promptly. He came, was put to bed with a man nurse in the room to the right of the front door, and was cared for there for over a year.

The opportunities for learning for which he had left the monastic life so congenial to his nature, were fully utilized. The list of his authoritative books is impressive. Miss Bond, the daughter of his friend, records that two years before his death he entered her house triumphant, declaring he had just finished his book on Patristic Greek. In his will he left money to

Harvard College for its publication. A friend who knew this became disturbed when several years passed and no book appeared. In concern, he openly complained of this in a company of people. He was drawn aside by one who overheard and told that President Eliot and his informer had searched for the manuscript among Sophocles' papers in vain. It has never been found, not even in the hiding place under a certain board of the floor in his room in Holworthy Hall where he habitually hid his treasures.

It was characteristic of Maria Fay to take in her friend in his need, for a stay so long and so burdensome, without question or delay.

For fifty years the Fay Homestead had been hospitable to family, friend, and stranger. But as age increased and family and friends became few, Maria Fay found the house too full of sad memories. In 1885, she offered it for sale to the "Society for the Collegiate Instruction of Women," an experiment in women's education inadequately housed nearby. Never again would she enter the house above the cellar. Only whimsical recollection of Professor Sophocles' hens was bearable. But, as the doors of the Homestead opened to women students and the house changed to a college, its name was kept to retain the spirit of the past half-century. From now on, it is Fay House, in her memory.

VI

Future Assured

AGAIN the pioneer is on Guy Bambrige's land. The idea of giving to women the education of Harvard men, by Harvard teachers, toward a degree guaranteed equivalent to Harvard's — this was new in 1879. A few American colleges were coeducational. Separate colleges for women, with women teachers, were beginning to push back the barrier of prejudice. But the idea which came to Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Gilman of Cambridge was different. It claimed that women were equal to the standards of Harvard instruction, but it did not ask for coeducation. Harvard instruction should be repeated to the women with standard and requirements unchanged. They carried their adventurous plan to Professor J. B. Greenough and to six ladies carefully chosen for social position, who would not be considered too advanced or in favor of coeducation — Mrs. J. B. Greenough, Miss Alice Longfellow, Miss Lillian Horsford, Mrs. J. P. Cooke, Mrs. Louis Agassiz, and Mrs. E. W. Gurney. They cordially sponsored the

plan. Public opinion was then hostile to the higher education of women, or, at best, incredulous and amused. Mr. Amory, in that poem inspired by the charming and feminine Misses Davis, well expressed the masculine attitude.

> If Adam earliest, and then gentle Eve,
> In Eden dwelt, with naught but to obey,
> She quick to learn and easy to deceive,
> Thirsty for knowledge, led him first astray, —
> If parable, it teaches more than truth,
> A lesson all of us may take to heart,
> That if we would escape the serpent's tooth,
> We best leave Adam to his books apart;
> Nor let his weakness by a siren song
> Be blindly led from what is right to wrong.

But President Eliot and the Harvard professors differed from Mr. Amory, and the experiment started in 1879, with twenty-seven serious women students. In 1885, this "Society for the Collegiate Instruction of Women" (better known as the "Harvard Annex") bought the Fay Homestead for $20,000. The growth of Cambridge is evident in the increase from the purchase price of $4500 just fifty years before. Fay House became the sole building, for many years, of the activities of the Society and of Radcliffe College, into which it developed without change of the original idea.

Now all the threads of the past three hundred years are being rewoven. The pattern is new, but many a thread reappears. Though the venture was an experiment, McKean and Everett would have looked with favor upon its scholastic trend, predominantly classical in the first years. The gracious ideals of the accomplished "lady" were exemplified in the first President, Mrs. Louis Agassiz, and the first Dean, Miss Agnes Irwin. Professor Gibbs would see that narrow path of experimental method, which he blazed, a broad highway for research. That golden thread of music, that has been so prominent in the pattern (with the lovely young Davises, Maria Fay's sweet voice and the glorious song of Lillie Greenough, Mrs. Sullivan's touch on the piano and the talent of Mrs. Gibbs), reappears in the emphasis on choral music at Radcliffe, whose students sing with the Boston Symphony Orchestra.

The old Cambridge town has receded into the past. No longer do the bells of the slow, sociable horsecars, straw on floor and stove at end, tinkle past the Fay House porch, where Maria Fay shelled peas with poets and philosopher. Swift and impersonal, the subway trains link a suburban Cambridge to Boston. But Harvard College remains, and the permanence of Radcliffe College has precedent behind it. The creations of men's hands vanish, but the universities re-

main. They are based on that deep impulse, the pursuit of truth. The American college has added to this purpose the service of man. For truth and democracy, where better could a college stand than on the pioneer's "ackr," facing the common lands and the wilderness way!

NOTE ON MAP OPPOSITE PAGE 8

This water-color map of Cambridge Common, submitted as a mathematical thesis in 1784 by Joshua Green (Harvard College, Class of 1784), is reprinted in *Ten Fac-simile Reproductions Relating to Old Boston and Neighborhood.* This book was prepared by Samuel Abbott Green, and one hundred copies were printed in 1901 by John Wilson and Son, at the University Press. The text preceding this map of the Common, which is numbered IX in the series, is in part as follows:

During a long period of years it was the custom at Harvard College for members of the Senior class to prepare mathematical theses, which were presented to the Professor of Mathematics and Natural Philosophy for his examination and criticism, and also to a Committee of the Overseers; and presumably they were marked like any other academic exercise.

At the present time there is in my possession: "A Plot of Cambridge Common with a View of the Roads, & a principal part of the Buildings thereon," which was drawn in water colors by my grandfather, Joshua Green, Class of 1784, a son of Joshua Green, Class of 1749. It was given to me, when I was an undergraduate, — now more than fifty years ago, — by my father, Joshua Green, Class of 1818; and I have always understood that it was an exercise in connection with the first degree at College.

It represents Cambridge Common with its various angles and the several roads running across it, besides the dwelling houses and other buildings facing it.

It is not claimed that these buildings are drawn with strict accuracy or with mathematical precision, as the artist was in no sense a skilled draftsman, but only an average college student.

The buildings represented are Harvard College at the bottom of the picture, Christ Church, the fourth schoolhouse, a house on the Prentice land, the barracks, the home of Dr. Waterhouse, the old tavern, and four houses on the Menotomy road, the lowest of which was the Jonathan Hasting estate in 1784, had been General Ward's headquarters in 1775, and was to be the birthplace of Oliver Wendell Holmes in 1809.

Christ Church was built in 1760–61. The school-building was erected in 1769 and removed in 1832. "Cooper" Prentice occupied the Prentice house at the time the map was drawn, since it was not sold to the Hon. John Prentice until December, 1784. The barracks were still on the Common in 1784, according to Joshua Green. The ancient William Vassall house was occupied by Dr. Waterhouse in 1784. Waterhouse Street is not marked on the map, but it was laid out in 1724, and received its present name in 1800. The east end of Garden Street, upon which the Prentice house faced, was called Washington Street from the Revolution to 1848. The Washington Elm is not depicted. Perhaps nine years was not long enough to establish a tradition. The old path from Charlestown to Watertown is clear upon the map as a road passing diagonally across the Common and swinging toward Charles River by the Prentice house. Fay House stands on the same spot in the acre of land as did the old house. Apparently that roof which fell upon William Prentice's household had begun to sag by 1784.

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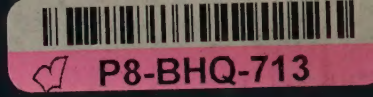
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